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PUBLICATIONS
OF THE
NAVY RECORDS SOCIETY
Vol. LV.

THE LETTERS OF
LORD ST. VINCENT

Vol. I.

The accompanying volumes, viz.:

**Vol. LV. The Letters of Lord St. Vincent
(Vol. I)**

**Vol. LVI. The Life and Works of Sir Henry
Mainwaring (Vol. II)**

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PUBLICATIONS
OF THE
NAVY RECORDS SOCIETY
Vol. LV.

THE LETTERS OF
LORD ST. VINCENT

Vol. I.

*These letters have been selected
and transcribed from St. Vincent's
Letter Books in the British Museum
(Add. MSS. 31168, 31169, 31170)*

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LETTERS OF
ADMIRAL OF THE FLEET
THE EARL OF ST. VINCENT

WHILST
FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY
1801-1804

VOL. I

EDITED BY
DAVID BONNER SMITH

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION



I. THE POLITICAL REARRANGEMENT

OF 1801

THE policy of Cabinets is necessarily influenced by the state of political parties. Governments commanding a strong majority can formulate a strong policy both at home and abroad ; but with a small majority will be reflected a correspondingly small inclination to embark upon contentious measures. Unenviable, however, are those called upon in times of grave national danger, commanding no majority, leading no party, tolerated rather than supported, their tenure of office limited till such time as one or other of the political parties shall again bid for power. Few statesmen in such circumstances have added to their reputations ; the Addington Ministry affords no exception.

Yet, with the passing of time, when the judgment of the historian shall revise the prejudice of the partisan, some small measure of recognition—perhaps, even, of sympathy—will be meted out to such men for having courageously shouldered a burden from which others had shrunk, nor were ashamed to admit it ; and which they themselves knew might well prove greater than they could bear.

So it has happened with Addington. To the ridicule of Canning, to the hostility of George

Rose, has succeeded the sympathetic tribute of Lord Ashbourne :

There never was a man called to great office under circumstances of greater complexity and difficulty. History has hardly given him his due. It has been his hard lot to be always contrasted with Pitt, a Prime Minister of over seventeen years' standing, with a great record and exceptional gifts. Judged by his words and actions, by the difficulties he had to face on the Continent and in England, in the House of Commons and out of it, with the occasional friendship, sometimes the precarious neutrality, and as often the real hostility of Pitt, Addington comes fairly well out of the ordeal. His letters are worthy and dignified. His motives were always honourable and upright, and he was ever animated by a sincere sense of duty and patriotism.¹

Nor is it improbable that the partizan judgments on others of his Administration may bear revision in like manner.

When it was first formed [wrote Earl Stanhope], there were great hopes from Lord St. Vincent. His appointment was hailed on all sides as the best that could be made. It proved, on the contrary, one of the very worst that the Admiralty of England has ever known. To this very day it is held up as a standing argument on the side of those who maintain that a landsman may often be preferred to a seaman as First Lord.²

Yet to whatever use such arguments have been put, it is certain that these judgments on St. Vincent's administration have been based upon very imperfect knowledge.

* * * * *

¹ Pitt : *Some Chapters of his Life and Times*, p. 317. By the Right Hon. Edward Gibson, Lord Ashbourne. (London, 1898.)

² *Life of the Right Hon. William Pitt*, iv. 110. By Earl Stanhope. Second edition. (London, 1862.)

A brief narrative may be attempted of the events surrounding the sudden and only partly explained withdrawal of the Prime Minister from political life ; mere words can do little to indicate the sensation which the event caused. 'It was impossible to turn the corner of a street,' said *The Times*, 'without being asked whether it was true that Mr. Pitt was out.'

Every endeavour had been made by Pitt's Government to attach due significance to the passing of so important a constitutional Act as the Union of Great Britain and Ireland. In the Fleet, it had been celebrated on the first day of the new year 'with every solemnity in our power,' as the Commander-in-Chief rather subtly expressed it, when the first appearance of several new flags and a considerable promotion had had a fitting reception.

At Westminster, the event was to be marked by the opening in state by The King of the first session of the Imperial Parliament, and the date had been publicly fixed, after some uncertainty, for 29th January—a Thursday. On the Tuesday, however, a Committee of the Privy Council was held at the Board of Trade, at which the Earl of Clare and Lord Castlereagh were present from Ireland. Little seems to be known of what took place at this meeting, or of events immediately following ; but at the levee at St. James's next day, The King himself publicly and pointedly questioned Dundas : 'What is it that this young Lord [*i.e.* Castlereagh] has brought over which they are going to throw at my head ? . . . I shall reckon any man my personal enemy who proposes any such measure.' He spoke in the same sense to other Ministers present.

A Cabinet meeting had been arranged for that

afternoon, 'to agree on opinions to be submitted to The King' and 'to settle how far any language should be held by members of Government' upon The King's speech at the opening of Parliament next day. Instead, a resolution was taken at this meeting to postpone the ceremony. At six o'clock this decision was forwarded to The King, and at nine o'clock a full meeting of Ministers was held at the Duke of Portland's, lasting till near midnight. The news was not publicly known overnight until too late for the morning Press, and it is to inquiries by the Press and apologies for having misled its readers that our knowledge of the course of events is mainly due.

It is hardly necessary to enter very fully into the details of the Cabinet's proposals which had led to the present crisis; they are set out in Pitt's letter to The King of 31st January.¹ One of the matters for consideration, arising out of the Union with Ireland, was the question of the Roman Catholic Church, which it was proposed to deal with 'by gradually attaching the Popish clergy to the Government, and, for this purpose, making them dependent for a part of their provision (under proper regulations) on the State, and by also subjecting them to superintendence and control.'

No Cabinet decision was actually taken upon these proposals, which had formed the subject of several conversations. In drawing up his letter to The King, Pitt says 'he has concurred in what appeared to be the prevailing sentiments of the majority of the Cabinet'; but no member of the Cabinet was aware, apparently, that in the discussions he was committed to anything more

¹ Stanhope's *Pitt*, iii., Appendix.

than an expression of opinion. Dundas, whom The King approached on the subject, 'protests he did not look on the last conversations . . . as a final decision. . . .'¹

The question was still in the hands of the politicians only. 'As far as our discussions went, the opinion of what would be a majority of the whole Cabinet seemed to be in favour,' Pitt wrote to his brother; but both the Lord Chancellor and the Home Secretary (responsible Minister for Irish affairs) were against. What would have followed 'a resolute resistance to the measure—a resistance headed by the Primate in England and by the Primate in Ireland,' notes Stanhope, events which a later generation came to know only too well—these it is unnecessary to dwell on; Pitt, himself, admits 'I did not foresee the extent of the consequences to which within this week the question has led.'²

As has been stated, The King intervened before the question had been regularly submitted to him, and in his intervention put the question on a different plane entirely. It is known that it was the advice of the Lord Chancellor as Keeper of the King's Conscience, and of the Archbishop of Canterbury, with whom The King was continually in consultation during this period, that the proposed establishment of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland was contrary to his Coronation Oath; and, so advised by the heads of the law both civil and ecclesiastical, his course of action lay clearly before him. In an opinion on the Coronation Oath, given to The King in March 1795, Lord Kenyon had written: 'It seems

¹ The King to Addington, 13th February 1801.

² Pitt to his brother, 5th February 1801.

to me that the judgement of the person who takes the Coronation Oath must determine whether any particular statute proposed does destroy the government of the Established Church.' 'Where is that power on earth,' said The King to General Garth, 'to absolve me from the due observance of every sentence of that Oath, particularly the one requiring me to *maintain the Protestant reformed religion*? Was not my family seated on the throne for that express purpose?'

Advised that the measure under consideration would be contrary to his Oath, The King was anxious by all possible means to prevent its presentation: for, once presented, he would be bound to maintain his Oath. And then? . . .

Only ten years or so before this very question had been raised, when, in the summer of 1789, the French National Assembly began their labours to frame a new Constitution. Foremost before everything had come the attempt to define the position of the King in the Constitution, his right to do aught but accept the laws proposed by the People's Representatives. English constitutional theorists have no small responsibility for the irresistible logic of those debates, which culminated, on 5th October 1789, in the transfer of all authority to 'The People,' leaving a King stript of all but his pen. The day following, Louis XVI set out in triumph to Paris, taking the first step on a journey to terminate inevitably on the *Place de la Révolution*.

To maintain his Oath meant recourse to 'the Veto,' and these Veto discussions, with their precedent of 1789, it was The King's earnest wish to avoid.

The meeting of Ministers on the 28th January terminated about midnight. At that moment,

The King's information was that Dundas and Grenville were in favour of the Irish proposals, and 'it is suggested by those best informed that Mr. Pitt favours this opinion.' He therefore wrote to the Speaker of the House of Commons, on the 29th:

As I know we think alike on this great subject, I wish he would, from himself, open Mr. Pitt's eyes on the danger arising from the agitating this improper question, which may prevent his ever speaking to me on a subject on which I can hardly keep my temper . . . such a change must inevitably unhinge our excellent and happy constitution, and be most exactly following the steps of the French Revolution. . . .

Addington saw Pitt and, from The King's reply, one gathers that Pitt had not at that time committed himself to any final decision, The King being 'highly pleased at the just grounds to hope that Mr. Pitt will see the impropriety of his giving countenance to a proposition not less big with danger than absurdity.' The same day, however, the 31st, The King was informed that Pitt had decided to commit himself to the Irish proposals, and was writing. On Sunday morning, 1st February, The King received Pitt's letter of the 31st January already referred to; and from the moment of writing it, Pitt considered himself 'out.' His letters and The King's replies will be found in Stanhope's 'Pitt';¹ his Personal Statement, in the House of Commons Debates, 16th February 1801.

* * * * *

Very earnest efforts were made by The King to prevent Pitt withdrawing from office, but

¹ Vol. iii., Appendix.

without avail; and on 5th February it became necessary for him to accept his withdrawal and to attempt a rearrangement of the Cabinet—one, 'such as Mr. Pitt will think most to the advantage of my service.' According to *The Times*, 9th February 1801: 'By the first arrangement Mr. Addington was to have been First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer; but the Duke of Portland has been particularly requested by His Majesty to fill the office of Prime Minister, and Mr. Addington will therefore only be Chancellor of the Exchequer.' How far this is actually true does not appear; it is certainly suggested by Dundas in his letter to Pitt, 7th February 1801.¹ The following day, however, *The Times* announced: 'We learn it has been determined that the Right Hon. H. Addington should be the new Prime Minister as well as Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Duke of Portland having preferred to remain in his present office.'

So far as can be ascertained, however, Portland did not receive the offer suggested. On the 5th, Pitt wrote to his brother of his withdrawal, adding, 'I have long been persuaded that, whenever He might have occasion to do so, the Speaker would be the person to whom He would resort. It has proved so in the present instance, and I am most happy to find that the Speaker feels it his duty, in which I have most strongly and decidedly encouraged him, not to decline the task.' Meanwhile, the public announcement of the event was deferred until the support of the principal Ministers had been secured, a task which The King himself undertook, at Addington's suggestion.

¹ Holland Rose, *William Pitt and the Great War* (1911), p. 449.

. . . I have spoken to the Lord Chancellor, the Duke of Portland and Earl Spencer. . . . The former seemed very much affected, and considerably afraid; the second very honourable and explicit as to his readiness to support and hold office; the third, as was supposed, very moderate in his language, but determined to retire, if Mr. Pitt, on the ground of the difference, should give up his employment. . . . To the former I showed Mr. Pitt's letters, and my answers, which I thought was the fullest communication I could give, except adding my having called upon Mr. Speaker to stand forth at the head of the Treasury. Earl Spencer's language prevented my informing him of that intention.

The First Lord of the Admiralty had, in fact, taken a leading part in the Cabinet's Irish discussions, and in a conversation with General Ross, communicated to the Lord Lieutenant on 15th January, had informed him that he expected The King would give way on the Catholic question.¹ Something had indeed passed between The King, Spencer, and Grenville about that date, and is alluded to by The King in his letter to Dundas, 7th February 1801—but from it, Spencer must have drawn a wrong conclusion. In his interview with The King on 5th February, Spencer practically resigned, and the question of his successor was immediately taken up. 'It is not yet fixed who is to be First Lord of the Admiralty,' says *The Times*, 10th February 1801. '. . . The Duke of Clarence and the Marquis of Buckingham have been mentioned as having applied for this office, but we are well assured that neither will obtain it.' The Speaker had, in fact, nominated the Commander-in-Chief of the Channel Fleet, and the decision awaited St. Vincent's arrival in town.

¹ *Cornwallis Correspondence*, iii. 333.

In communicating the nomination to The King, 9th February, Addington wrote :¹

. . . The difficulty of supplying, in an adequate manner, the vacancy which unfortunately will take place at the Admiralty cannot but have impressed itself forcibly on Your Majesty's mind. After the best consideration which the Speaker has been enabled to give to this subject, he has formed the opinion that it is by Earl St. Vincent that the duties of the situation now filled so ably and honourably by Earl Spencer would, upon the retirement of the latter, be executed most beneficially to the Country at the present crisis. . . . He is fully aware that this proposition is liable to objections, which were not counterbalanced in his own mind except after much reflection, and communication with a few persons whose opinions were most calculated to be useful to him in forming his own. . . . The consideration that Earl St. Vincent is a professional man suggests observations which can only be rendered unavailing, according to the Speaker's conceptions, by a conviction that the war henceforth to be carried on will be of a nature to require all the promptitude, energy and ability which eminently distinguish the person in question. . . . Upon this and other subjects, the Speaker hopes to be allowed to explain himself more fully when he next pays his duty to Your Majesty. . . .

* * * * *

St. Vincent at that moment was actually expecting a summons to town—though not quite of this nature. For some while he had been

¹ Quoted by Dean Pellew in his *Life of Sidmouth*. In a footnote it is added : ' The matter omitted from this letter contains nothing that is prejudicial to any person whatever. Lord Sidmouth told the author, 5th February 1841, that Lord St. Vincent's appointment as First Lord of the Admiralty had been suggested by Mr. Pitt, and that Lord Hood had been very nearly selected ' (*Life and Correspondence of the Right Hon. Henry Addington, First Viscount Sidmouth*, by the Hon. George Pellew, Dean of Norwich, 1847, i. 300).

turning his mind towards possible operations in the Baltic. The exchange of Diplomatic Notes was still going on through Foreign Office channels, but reports from the Continent of conferences of staffs, activity in dockyards, fortification of strategic points, mobilisation of classes, these all pointed a warning, of which the significance could not be disregarded. If a new war should develop, time would be the all-deciding factor. 'If you are active, our Fleet will be in the Baltic before any of the leagued Powers can get theirs to sea, and thereby cut off all possibility of junction between the Russ and the Dane,' he wrote privately to Nepean (11th January 1801). '. . . Sir Andrew Hamond and Sir William Rule are ignorant men, if they say you cannot get every ship in England ready by the First of June.'

Both Parker and Nelson were in town; for himself, St. Vincent adds, 'I will hold myself in constant readiness to obey any summons that may be made, but I had much rather stay where I am.' However, the following day, he altered this opinion: 'Upon second thoughts, it is very advisable I should go to town for a few days, therefore the sooner you send me the order the better.' Although, on the 13th January, he writes, 'My trunk is packed, and Tucker holds himself in constant readiness to accompany me to town'; and again, on the 15th, 'Why do you not order me up to town?'; none the less, on the 9th of February, he was still at Tor Abbey, suggesting, advising, expediting, '. . . though you should call me to town.'

It was in these circumstances that he received the official letter of the 9th February: 'You have their Lordships' permission to come to town whenever you shall find it convenient so to do,

leaving such instructions for the officer next in seniority to you as you may conceive to be necessary for the regulation of his conduct during your absence.' By the same post, also, came Addington's letter and a private note from Nepean. To both he replied on the 11th. To Addington :

I am honoured with your letter of the 9th, and will set out for London the moment I have made a few necessary arrangements for carrying on the public service in my absence. All the knowledge and sense I possess on naval subjects shall be, as it always has been, devoted to the service and support of Government, and, lamenting as I do most sincerely that any reverse in this arduous contest should make it necessary for Mr. Pitt to retire from his situation, I deem it a most fortunate event for the Country that His Majesty's choice has fallen upon you.

To Nepean :

I shall, as you judiciously advise, wait the arrival of the post before I set out for town, for I must see you before I take any measure whatsoever; for, in full possession as I am of the wretched state of the whole naval department, civil and military, it requires some deliberation to decide upon so momentous an undertaking, which nothing short of the entire concurrence and approbation of Mr. Pitt, Mr. Dundas and Lord Spencer would induce me to listen to for a moment. . . . Until the Messenger arrived I was in total ignorance of what was doing.

In accordance with this intention, 'on Thursday night, at 12 o'clock, the Earl of St. Vincent arrived at his house in Mortimer Street from Tor Abbey. Immediately on his arrival Mr. Nepean waited on His Lordship,' says *The Times*. The Press had already been informed of the offer to be made to him, and some comments are not

a little reminiscent of the Speaker's letter to the King.

It has been remarked that naval men have never given satisfaction in the Admiralty Department; and it has come to be considered as a principle that it ought not to be filled by an Admiral. It is certain that if any dispensation of the rule be wise and tolerable, it must be in favour of such extraordinary merit as Lord St. Vincent's, and at any rate it will be a consolation to the Navy and to the Public that the Channel Fleet will continue to be commanded by him.¹

That the double appointment here suggested was in contemplation seems unlikely; but it was not until six days later that *The Times* announced 'Lord St. Vincent has been persuaded to relinquish the command of the Channel Fleet, on account of the pressure of public business at the Board.'

* * * * *

In the political world, St. Vincent might almost be regarded as a non-party man. The outbreak of war with France had proved a turning-point for the Pitt Government, bringing as it did such accessions of strength to Government as to leave the Opposition impotent and practically negligible. The accession of the Portland Whigs, in July 1794, is foreshadowed by St. Vincent as early as 12th February 1793, when, as Member for Chipping Wycombe, his line of conduct had been approved by his Chief.

I have just heard [he wrote to his brother] that Mr. Parker Coke has signed a paper drawn up by Burke and Windham to pledge such members of the late Opposition as choose to sign it to support Ministry through the War. . . . I understand they have got

¹ *The Times*, 13th February 1801.

twenty-four names. There will be a very interesting Debate upon the King's Message, and it will be proved that the French were compelled by the conduct of Ministers here to go to war with us. As I have offered my services and know that I am to command a division in Lord Howe's fleet, Lord Lansdowne agrees with me that I ought to take no part in this question, and I do not intend to go down. . . .

In the intervening years the Marquess of Lansdowne had practically withdrawn from politics ; yet, should some political upheaval place the Opposition in power, he might still be expected to undertake such office as declining health and advancing years would permit. St. Vincent still looked to him as his Chief, and in a measure would be entering the Government from the ranks of the Opposition.

We have heard it mentioned from good authority, that previous to His Lordship's final acceptance of his new office, he consulted his old friend, the Marquis of Lansdowne, to whose party the noble Admiral has always been attached. The Marquis advised him by all means to accept so distinguished an honour, and represented that the present circumstances of the country demanded no less from his virtue ; but he recommended to His Lordship to interfere as little as possible with anything that did not immediately regard his own department, and only to attend the Cabinet when naval affairs were under discussion. It is generally believed that Earl St. Vincent has accepted the office he holds under this express avowal of his intentions.¹

The general belief is rather confirmed by Rose's statement :

Lord St. Vincent came to town in consequence of the overture to him, and professed a perfect willingness to

¹ *The Times*, 19th February 1801.

accept the Admiralty, but suggested some embarrassment from his being committed on the question respecting the Test Act, as far as relates to Dissenters; but Mr. Pitt replied he was not bound by his acceptance of the office to any particular line in Parliament, and he left him with a determination to take the situation.¹

* * * * *

Naturally, there is little in writing of these conversations. On the Saturday morning, the second day after St. Vincent's late arrival in town, The King wrote to the Speaker: 'This is the anniversary of the Earl of St. Vincent's Victory. I should think it would flatter him much if Mr. Addington would desire him to call on me. Any hour this afternoon will be perfectly convenient, as I shall not stir from home.' It was indeed the Fourteenth of February; and in the course of the day St. Vincent had a long private audience with The King at Buckingham Palace (or 'The Queen's House,' as it was then called). In the evening The King wrote to Addington acquainting him with 'the general language of Earl St. Vincent, which was explicit and satisfactory.'

Over the week-end, the composition of the new Board of Admiralty was decided on, and was announced in Monday's papers; the following Friday, 20th February, St. Vincent was sworn into his office as a Privy Councillor, and the same day the new Board met for the first time.

In the new Board the proportion of four civilians to three naval officers was maintained; but, the First Lord being a sea officer, an opening

¹ *The Diaries and Correspondence of the Right Hon. George Rose* (edited by the Rev. Leveson Vernon Harcourt, 1860), i. 299.

was made for an extra Civil Lord. The Board thus constituted was as follows :

Admiral John Earl of St. Vincent, K.B.

Sir Philip Stephens, Bart.

Hon. William Elliot.

Captain Sir Thomas Troubridge, Bart., R.N.

James Adams, Esq.

Captain John Markham, R.N.

William Garthshore, Esq.

1st Secretary—Evan Nepean, Esq.

2nd Secretary—William Marsden, Esq.

The Board of Admiralty thus got to work early. Many Members of the new Government, however, had yet to go through the formality of re-election, and Addington was amongst these. Their number had been increased by a considerable body of resignations which had followed the sudden announcement of Pitt's withdrawal. In the first excitement caused by the news, many resignations had been tendered which, by Pitt's personal intervention, had later been withdrawn ; but a few irreconcilables adopted a policy of absolute hostility to the new Prime Minister, necessitating a further rearrangement of offices than was at first anticipated. To the approaching storm from the Continent was now added the additional threat of coming political strife at home, and the country was rapidly drifting into an extremely critical situation. The King had once already seen his Country brought to abject defeat by party strife, and the danger of the situation was now preying on his mind. A severe cold developed into a fever ; the Council on the 20th February, at which St. Vincent had been sworn in, The King had attended despite his illness ; shortly afterwards his mind gave way entirely.

The Government was now placed in a very delicate position. Pitt had not formally surrendered the Treasury Seals, pending Addington's re-election ; but no claim to the King's confidence could be advanced on his behalf, for it was sufficiently notorious that this had been transferred to Addington. Many discussions appear, marked by much splitting of hairs, as to the position of the two *Prime Ministers*, the one *de jure*, the other *de facto*, and weighty authority is quoted against the very existence of such an office in the Constitution. Meanwhile, on the 25th February, 'Mr. Pitt had a long audience of the Prince of Wales, in consequence of a request transmitted to Carlton House. . . . The object of the visit was to represent to the Prince his own peculiar situation, together with that of the Country, in consequence of the King's sudden and unexpected indisposition, and to submit to His Royal Highness the measures he considered as necessary to be taken. It was true that he had tendered his resignation to His Majesty : that the resignation had been graciously accepted and publicly announced : and that he had only remained in office for several days past for the specific purpose of facilitating that part of the public business which had come most immediately under his observation and department. The conclusion, however, was that, notwithstanding all that had passed, he was still *de facto* in office and he thought it his duty to hold his situation until His Majesty's recovery, or until some other disposition of affairs.

'The Prince of Wales is said to have listened with every possible attention to Mr. Pitt's representation, and to have agreed with him that, not having completed all the formalities of his resignation, he was still to be considered

as holding his situation, notwithstanding His Majesty had transferred his favour to another Minister. . . .'¹

It was impossible, however, to mark time like this indefinitely ; all government was at a stand-still. ' Lord St. Vincent, it is said, assisted a day or two ago at a sort of Cabinet ; finding nothing like business going on, he got up, and said, if he was not wanted, he must go away, as really he had no time to throw away ; and so left the Cabinet.' ²

It had become absolutely necessary to consider the setting up of a Council of Regency, upon the precedent of the Regency Bill of 1789. In discussing it with Rose on the 26th February, Pitt ' expressed a strong opinion that the Regent, if appointed, should call into his service Mr. Addington ; that His Majesty, on his recovery, might find in his service the person He meant before his illness to place in it.' Meanwhile, The King's health had been mending rapidly ; but the necessity of obtaining an authoritative signature to the Loan Bill, which the financial situation made it essential to introduce by the 14th March in order to pass by the 23rd, made it advisable to proceed with the Regency proposal as a measure of precaution. ' It was yesterday in general circulation . . . that a Council of Regency would be appointed, consisting of the Prince of Wales, Mr. Pitt, Lord Thurlow, Lord Spencer and Lord Moira ; and that Mr. Addington would be called up to the House of Peers and be made Speaker.' ³ The Council, however, was never set up. The King's health had mended so rapidly that on the

¹ *The Times*, 27th February 1801.

² *Malmesbury's Diary*, 28th February 1801.

³ *The Times*, 10th March 1801.

11th March it was possible to dispense with the daily bulletins, and to lay aside all temporary expedients of government. Accordingly, on the 14th March, 'Mr. Pitt assisted at a Board of Treasury, where the business of that office was finally wound up. Mr. Pitt went from thence, at 3 o'clock, to the Queen's House, where he had an audience of His Majesty, and resigned the Seals of his office, which were immediately delivered by The King to Mr. Addington.'¹

II. THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

(a) THE ANGLO-RUSSIAN-AUSTRIAN ALLIANCE

OF the immediate business before the new Board of Admiralty, priority in consideration must be accorded to the Baltic expedition just on the point of sailing; and although no responsibility for the international situation attaches to the new Administration, yet some survey of the relations between this Country and Russia is necessary to explain the unhappy spectacle of two Monarchies, allied so lately against a common enemy, now fast turning their arms against one another—yet still ostensibly in amity.

Born little more than a year before out of the brilliant promise of the victory at The Nile, the Grand Alliance of Britain, Portugal, Russia, Turkey, Austria, Sardinia, and the Italian States had everywhere raised high the hopes of a speedy peace. On all fronts its overwhelming numbers were engaged in a victorious offensive—when with startling suddenness the Country discovered that

¹ *The Times*, 16th March 1801.

the Alliance had fallen to pieces ; that not only had our great Allies drifted away from us, but the whole of Western and Northern Europe was fast turning its arms against us in our isolation. Not infrequently the brilliant efforts in the ranks have been woefully supported in the high command, and Nelson could with truth tell the First Lord, ' I have seen that jealousy between the Allies has served the cause of the French more than their arms.'

The fact is, however, that the Alliance had been precarious from the first. Russia, who had bound herself in Treaties with Turkey, Naples, and Sardinia to preserve the integrity of their territories, had from the beginning found herself unable to support Austria in her plans of aggression and annexation ; and to the Czar's protests our own had been added. To such a height did these difficulties rise that in October 1799 the Czar actually suspended the Alliance and ordered the withdrawal of his forces ; and at the same moment, our own Cabinet, in ignorance of the Russian ultimatum, was taking similar action, threatening Austria with our withdrawal from the Continental war and our advising the Czar to act similarly. In our case, however, it was a diplomatic threat rather than a military decision, and was accompanied by representations at St. Petersburg for renewed attempts at co-operation, though, in Grenville's own words, ' Far from blaming the Emperor of Russia, I must say if I were a Russian Minister I should be very deaf to the remonstrances of England on the subject.'

It was at this moment, when the Allies were about to take up an emphatic line of conduct against one of their own number, that Bonaparte

returned from Egypt and the whole Alliance underwent a remarkable change.

The proposals of the Czar were not to withdraw from the war with Revolutionary France, but to create a new league, to include Prussia, Norway and Sweden, which would dictate the settlement of the whole of Europe at the coming peace. How far the failure of the Anglo-Russian operations in Holland, under the Duke of York and Abercromby, rendered this impracticable, it is unnecessary to say. What the failure did do, however, was to create so bitter a feeling in the Russian army against the British high command that, in the proposed conjoint operations on the coasts of France, the Czar found it necessary to stipulate against the Duke of York being again employed in command.

The failure in Holland was followed by the distrust expressed by Sir Charles Grey for the proposed operations on the French coast, and the British Government was forced rapidly to realise the futility of looking elsewhere than the Austrian frontier for decisive operations, and the absolute necessity for both Allies to support Austria if the war against France was to be continued. Whatever its results, the campaign of 1800 was to be the last offensive campaign undertaken by this Country on behalf of French monarchy.

It was not a decision taken with enthusiasm, but by February 1800 it had been agreed on our side to support Austria whole-heartedly, both by a loan and by auxiliaries ; by sending an expeditionary force to the Mediterranean to co-operate in North Italy ; by carrying on, at the same time, operations on the coast of France ; and, most significant of all, by refraining from all interference, either by advice or by criticism, with

Austrian military operations and supporting the proposed rearrangements of Italian territory so repugnant to Russia.

The probable effect of the British *volte face* had naturally been calculated by the Cabinet. Pitt's opinion, expressed in the House of Commons, 17th February 1800, when moving the Subsidy Vote, was: 'There was no reason to believe that His Imperial Majesty, the Emperor of Russia, will withdraw from the most cordial co-operation with this Country, or cease to shew his resolution not to acquiesce with France, whilst it pursues a system, such as it does now, that endangers the tranquillity of Europe, and all its establishments. But if there were any grounds of apprehension that His Imperial Majesty would withdraw all co-operation, I should then take the liberty of urging that as an additional reason for ' [the Austrian subsidy].

Meanwhile Sir Home Popham was entrusted by the Cabinet with the task of explaining the situation to the Russian Court. It was his misfortune to arrive at St. Petersburg on his delicate mission at a particularly tricky moment. Not only had 'Incident' succeeded 'Incident,' but the ~~Russian Intelligence Service~~ had obtained possession of the Austrian cypher, and Count Cobentzl's dispatches were being read in transit. Whatever their contents were (and apparently it is not known here what was said in them), the recall of both the British and the Austrian Ambassadors was demanded by the Czar. Home Popham, arriving in March 1800, was refused audience, and returned home. Sir Charles Whitworth followed on 8th June, and Count Woronzow, the Russian Ambassador at St. James's, received directions to go on leave at the same time. Russia

from that moment took up a position of benevolent neutrality—withdrawing from active operations, but remaining in sympathy with the object for which the coalition had been formed. Matters were in this state when news arrived of the remarkable catastrophe of Marengo.

It is not possible, in these days, to withhold from the brothers Bonaparte credit for the remarkable revival in the spirit of France that followed Napoleon's return from the East. In a few brief months the co-operation of all Frenchmen was gained for France and the Consulate, and when the First Consul himself took the field in May it was a united and, indeed, almost a new Nation that he led.

The campaign, meanwhile, had opened in Italy with uniform success to the Austrian arms, and Masséna had been forced back on Genoa. Keith, in command of the Mediterranean Squadron, was already in touch with the Austrians, and it was intended that Abercromby, with the Expeditionary Force from England, should land and co-operate. Delays, however, prevented his early arrival. 'If I were a seaman,' wrote Grenville, 'with half the superstition which belongs to them, I should certainly throw him overboard as a second Jonas.' It was the 1st July before he got up with Keith, at Leghorn, and heard the news of the preceding month. Genoa had fallen to the Allies on the 4th June, but Bonaparte, crossing the Alps, had fallen on the main Austrian Army on 14th June and completely defeated it at Marengo. The Austrians had withdrawn northwards, and so rapid had been the French advance that Keith himself had only with difficulty got out from Genoa as the French re-entered it.

Operations in Italy were now at an end, and an armistice had been signed on 15th June whereby the Austrians had evacuated Northern Italy. Abercromby and the Expeditionary Force thereupon returned to Minorca.

Following upon his victory at Marengo, Bonaparte opened up negotiations for peace with Austria ; and it soon became necessary to extend the period of the armistice on land. At that moment Anglo-Austrian relations were in a very curious position. Minor details, not settled without protracted wrangling, had delayed the signature of the Treaty of Alliance ; in fact, it was not until 20th June that this was at last effected—and within a few hours came the news of Marengo, fought six days before. In the peace negotiations which followed, Austria naturally endeavoured to give effect to her obligation not to conclude a separate peace, and the area of discussion began to widen accordingly. On the proposal to include this Country in the discussions, the French proposed a naval armistice with us, on lines similar to the military armistice—and everything appeared to be favourable to the proposed peace congress at Lunéville.

The summer of 1800 might well have been accepted, by the Allies, as the chosen moment for making peace. Unhappily, the British Government was convinced that France was rapidly crumbling to ruin, and that with the end of the armistice Austria would have reorganised and recovered from Bonaparte's lucky victory. A stiff attitude was adopted towards the peace proposals, which were attributed to Bonaparte's recognition of the approaching catastrophe—and friends, neutrals, and foes alike were treated with the same high hand.

The decisions were now taken which rapidly

ranged all Europe against us. That these decisions were not unanimous, even in the small War Committee of the Cabinet, we know : how far the illness of Pitt and Dundas, and the consequent passing of the controlling influence to Grenville, may be held responsible for the miscalculations they involved, it is neither possible nor pertinent to discuss here. It is not improbable that Lord Spencer's letters will shed further light on the inner workings of the Cabinet, which was now fast heading for a fall, divided amongst its own Members and alienating its supporters in the House.

The negotiations with Denmark were backed by an armed force which drew the immediate interposition of Russia : the orders to Abercromby regarding Malta involved a breach of faith the possibilities of which could scarcely have been fully explored. Meanwhile, the pressure being put by France upon Spain, to act against Portugal, our ally, had called for a decision as to the employment of Abercromby and the Expeditionary Force. The threat against Cadiz was not pushed home—humanitarian sentiments prevailing—and, in the available time until Portugal should require their presence, Abercromby and Keith were sent up the Mediterranean to clear up the muddle created by Sir Sidney Smith in Egypt. On 5th September, Malta fell at last ; Egypt was endangered ; important items in the peace negotiations were slipping from his grasp, when Bonaparte suddenly called off all discussions. On 3rd December 1800, Moreau smashed the Austrian Army at Hohenlinden, and the Continental War was over.

News a hundred years ago travelled slowly, and the completeness of the rout was only becoming

clear as Pitt and his Cabinet were surrendering office. The danger of the position created was becoming apparent. It was now seen that the Russian crisis was reacting on Turkish co-operation; the calculations of the Egyptian campaign had been falsified, and, instead of a speedy return from a brief campaign, the main British Army was about to be involved beyond recall on an expedition of which its commander wrote :

We are now on the point of sailing for Egypt, with very slender means for executing the orders we have received. I never went on any service entertaining greater doubts of success. . . .¹

It is a remarkable fact, that we were about to enter a war, largely of our own seeking, against the greatest numerical opposition ever ranged against us, and almost the whole of the Regular Army had been sent on a risky enterprise, which was to immobilise it for the duration of the war, so far as what promised to be the main theatre of operations was concerned.

(b) RUSSIA AND MALTA

The war in the North, developing as it did out of the diplomatic Notes on the Rights of Neutrals, is not infrequently attributed to the tenacity of the Nations in maintaining their respective standpoints in a matter of International Law, even to the point of proceeding to the arbitrament of arms. The whole weight of the campaign fell upon Denmark ; yet the fact is that

¹ Abercromby to Dundas, 16th February 1801.

the war (if, indeed, it should be rightly termed 'war,' for war was never formally proclaimed) was the direct result of our breach of faith with Russia over Malta; and the Northern Powers found themselves entangled in a dispute from which escape became more and more difficult as unwelcome war approached ever nearer. At the first realisation that war was involved, the neutral Powers took immediate alarm. 'The Dane is frightened out of his wits,' wrote Carysfort from Berlin, 29th November 1800, 'and called upon me yesterday to ask whether I knew of anything treating at London or Copenhagen which might save his Country from the danger.' And so, with Prussia, 'I understand also that this Court are most anxious to have us fairly embroiled with Russia upon the affair of Malta and the embargo, so that, in conjunction with the other Powers, it may enter into explanations with us that may prevent the rupture into which Russia would precipitate them all.' ¹

Indeed, the Malta policy of Pitt's Cabinet has much to answer for; amongst friendly nations it impugned our good faith; our own officers it equally offended. And it must be admitted that those whom it drove to direct enmity had much to justify their action.

It has been for long an aim of diplomacy to prevent the establishment by Russia of a footing in the Mediterranean, and in 1790 the threat had well-nigh precipitated a European war. It is in this light that the suspicion must be viewed that attached to Russia's enthusiasm for the cause of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem.

Russia had been brought into contact with

¹ Carysfort to Grenville, 8th February 1801.

the Order on the occasion of the Third Partition of Poland, when lands held by the Order had passed into Russian territory. Negotiations were proceeding in Queen Catherine's time for the restitution of the property of the Order and the payment of arrears of revenue. The moment was a particularly difficult one financially for the Order, which had suffered severely by the abolition of the French langue and the confiscation of its property. In England, the Order had long lost its holding, the Grand Priory having been disestablished in 1540, at the time of the Reformation, and the English precedent was now being used by Revolutionary France to sweep away what was, in truth, an anachronistic survival of mediæval and feudal times.

The Order had been mainly composed of French nobles, most of whom were now Emigrés; and when Count de Litta, himself an officer in the Russian Navy and brother of Cardinal Litta, Papal Nuncio at St. Petersburg, presented his credentials as Ambassador at the Russian Court, he prayed the Empress to become Protectress of the Order. The accession of the Czar Paul, in November 1796, brought the Order an enthusiastic friend, and, following on the creation and endowment of the Grand Priory of Russia, the Czar publicly accepted, on 29th November 1797, the title of Protector of the Order.

There is no suggestion that the Czar was actuated by any other than purely humanitarian motives in his action. The Order afforded machinery for the relief of the French refugees, and an invitation was extended to Louis XVIII to take up his residence in Russia. Meanwhile the Prince of Condé was created Grand Prior of the Russian Priory, one of the Royal Palaces

was put at his disposal, and, at a Grand Review before the Palace at St. Petersburg, his whole Army was taken into Russian service, receiving from the Czar Russian colours in exchange for those of Royalist France.

Naturally these events were bound sooner or later to attract the attention of France, with whom Russia was still at peace. Quite by chance, however, the courier carrying the originals of the Convention at St. Petersburg was captured by Bonaparte's army at Ancona, on his way to Malta, and his dispatches were forwarded to Paris.

French attention was now seriously turned to the position of affairs at Malta. It was clear that bankruptcy might force the Order to abandon the island, which would revert to the King of Naples—should no other arrangement be made. Meanwhile, the death of the Grand Master was momentarily expected, and a hostile German would succeed a Frenchman—albeit a Royalist. Emanuel, Prince de Rohan, Grand Master of the Order, died in July 1797, and the Council elected as his successor Ferdinand Hompesch, Bailiff of Brandenburg and brother of the Bavarian Minister—and it fell to him at his first meeting to ratify the Russian agreement.

However, the days of the Order were numbered. Already in May Bonaparte had enlarged on the danger in that quarter, and in September 1797 he definitely proposed its capture. Plans were being elaborated for the expedition to Egypt, and the capture of Malta was now incorporated in the scheme. The French Intelligence Service were already in possession of intercepted letters to the Grand Master, pressing in the strongest terms that the island should be occupied by the British, in view of the danger threatening from

Toulon. Whatever action might have been taken on them by the Grand Master was frustrated by the arrival of Bonaparte. Friends within played their pre-arranged part, and on 11th June 1798 the fortress capitulated.

The capture of Malta had so obviously been connived at from within that a very natural suspicion attached itself to the conduct of the Grand Master. It became his duty to convince at least three tribunals of the integrity of his conduct—and it cannot be said that he succeeded, although nowadays a more liberal view of his conduct prevails.

The Court of Naples demanded to know the right of the Order to sign away the sovereignty of the island, which belonged to the Crown of Naples. The Pope could not approve of the abolition of the Order without reference to the Langues; the Russian Priory were furious, and, with the approval of the Pope to the nomination of a Deputy to administer the Order in Russia, they withdrew their allegiance from von Hompesch, and pressure was put on him to resign his office of Grand Master. It was a year before the resignation was achieved, and then only under the threat from the Austrian Emperor of his being considered the Emperor's personal enemy and being treated as a prisoner of state. But before this formality had been effected the Russian Grand Priory had issued a Proclamation, pointing to the disastrous condition of the Order, its total want of resources, the loss of its Sovereignty and chief place of residence, and finally proclaiming the Czar of Russia, Grand Master of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem. On 13th November 1798 Paul solemnly accepted the title, by consent of The

Pope, and the Standard of the Order was hoisted on the bastions of the Admiralty at St. Petersburg.

From this moment the Czar took the keenest personal interest in the question of Malta, which now figured prominently in Russian policy. His desire, as Grand Master, was to effect the reinstallation of the Order at Malta, and proposals to that end were now put forward and agreed on by the Allies. On 29th December 1798, Sir Charles Whitworth, our Ambassador at St. Petersburg, signed a Convention with the Russian Chancellor, whereby it was agreed that the island should be held by a joint garrison of Russian, British, and Neapolitan troops, upon its surrender, pending rehabilitation of the Order. Upon receipt of the ratification in April 1799 the orders were given setting the Russian troops in motion.

In the meantime, operations against the French in Malta had been conducted by the Court of Naples, with whom Nelson had been acting in close concert, and the financial, rationing, and other relief work had been constituting a heavy charge on the Neapolitan treasury. The actual fighting, however, had fallen to the Maltese themselves, who unfortunately early showed an aversion to the prospect of coming under the Order once again or of joining the Crown of Naples in its misfortunes. In fact, there was a movement afoot to seek incorporation in the British Empire, arising without doubt from admiration of Ball and Nelson. These were before the days, however, of the plebiscite and the principles of self-determination, and the wishes of the Maltese counted for little.

The line of conduct had been laid down,

however, for Nelson, and in truth Russia began to figure very prominently on his horizon. In Northern Italy, Suwarrow carried all before him, and the Russians now began to arrive for the recapture of Naples, the defence of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, and the siege of Malta. By the summer of 1779 the Baltic Fleet and the allied Turco-Russian Levant Squadron had joined at Palermo; but Genoa and Ancona, added to a heavy sick list, prevented any move being made in the direction of Malta. As late as the 7th October 1799 Spencer was writing to Nelson: ' . . . The utmost importance is attached by His Majesty's Government to the object of carefully avoiding to do anything which may raise any jealousies in the mind of the Emperor of Russia, who is particularly bent on the point of restoring, under some new regulations, the Order of Malta; and whose conduct even on this subject, though one on which he may perhaps have been suspected by the world of entertaining more ambitious views, has been, as far as we are enabled to judge of it, of the most disinterested and honourable kind.'

The fact was that Anglo-Russian relations had been badly strained by the failure in Holland; the negotiations with Austria were about to strain them still further; and at this moment Bonaparte returned from the East. 'Malta,' wrote Wyndham to Grenville, 14th December 1799, 'which is in all respects of great consequence, may now become of more so as a means of keeping in good humour our violent friend Paul.'

It would not be difficult to assemble a large volume of naval and military opinion unfriendly to the action of the British Cabinet. Nelson

at a very early stage characterised the proceedings of Russia as 'a prelude to a future war with the good Turk, when Constantinople will change masters. This is so clear that a man must be blind not to see it.'¹ The fact is, however, that the Government were not by any means happy over it, and endeavoured in their discussions with the Czar to avoid as far as possible being entangled in the affairs of the Order as distinct from the affairs of Russia; for this reason, Whitworth was refused permission to accept the Order offered him by the Czar, and it is not difficult to imagine the effect of Nelson's direct letter to the Czar asking for the Order for Ball, as Chief of the Maltese, and Lady Hamilton, organiser of the Maltese relief work. Against the military occupation proposals Graham vigorously protested; and in April 1800, Sir Charles Stuart refused his instructions, preferring to throw up his command. Dundas, communicating the fact to Grenville, is particularly illuminating: '... When he writes to me that he cannot obey his instructions in so far as they go to the restoration of the Order of Malta, or putting the island under the despotism of Russia, although The King is bound by treaty to do so, there is no longer any opening for my interposing to smooth difficulties! I certainly regret as . . . deeply as he, or any person, can, the final disposition of Malta; but if our officers, who are to execute, are permitted to controvert our councils, there is an end of all government.'²

The decision had been taken, on the draft Instructions, 'to leave the thing as it is: to

¹ Nelson to St. Vincent, 26th March 1799.

² Dundas to Grenville, 25th April 1800.

satisfy ourselves with the advantage of having Malta rather in the hands of Russia than of France ; and not to attempt to open any fresh negotiation at Petersburg on the subject.'¹

As has been indicated already, Russia was at this time taking up a position practically amounting to benevolent neutrality towards the other Allies, and the scheme of operations in the Mediterranean had to be recast. On the 5th May, Abercromby was appointed to succeed Stuart as Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean, and the first clause of his Instructions related to the capture of Malta, reaffirming the directions for a joint garrison of British, Neapolitan and Russian troops pending its restoration to the Order of St. John. On the 13th May he sailed with Rear-Admiral Sir Richard Bickerton and the Expeditionary Force intended to co-operate with the Austrians at Genoa. The fruitless voyage up to Leghorn, the news of Marengo and the return via Cadiz to Gibraltar, have been referred to already.

General Pigot was left with the necessary force to press home the siege of Malta, now fast drawing to a close ; and suspicions began to be entertained as to his Orders. Paget, who had succeeded Hamilton at the Court of the Two Sicilies, found himself questioned by the Russian Minister on behalf of Admiral Ūsciakoff : and wrote to Keith accordingly for information. Keith's reply from off Minorca was that his Instructions still held good, and these were Sir Ralph Abercromby's also—of Pigot's Orders, he knew nothing.

But actually Pigot was busy scrapping agree-

¹ Grenville to Dundas, 23rd April 1800.

ments. Nelson and Sir William Hamilton had returned home and the new broom was making a clean sweep. The Maltese and Neapolitans were to be excluded from signing the articles of capitulation—despite the vigorous protests of Ball and Fardella; as for the Russians, 'for their own safety and comfort' they were to be dissuaded from attempting to be present; whilst, for the agreement to hoist the colours of the contracting Powers, 'I never heard of an instance of colours of different nations flying in a fortified town at the same time; but though La Valette, whenever it surrenders, is to be considered as falling to the British flag, yet no offence is intended thereby to the Courts of Russia, or Naples, or to the Maltese. . . .'

On 5th September 1800, Malta capitulated, and the business was carried through accordingly. Ball, 'truly disgusted,' was recommended by Abercromby for employment elsewhere; Fardella, and the Neapolitan troops, stayed on until the treaty between Naples and France occasioned their withdrawal, which was marked by an expression of thanks in General Orders. Paget's position at Palermo became impossible; afterwards Grenville told him that 'the great delicacy of the subject in question did not admit of my explaining to you the various changes which have been made.'¹ But in the meantime it fell to his lot to explain Abercromby's Orders to both Russians and Neapolitans. The Foreign Office was withholding its confidence, and Keith and Abercromby were out of his reach—they had gone to Gibraltar together to join with Pulteney from Ferrol and Vigo for the projected attack on Cadiz. Paget could only write to

¹ Grenville to Paget, 17th October 1800.

Keith for a lead, and Keith's reply is sufficiently illuminating :

On the subject of what passed at Malta, I never heard one word until the return of Sir Ralph Abercromby from that place, when he told me the orders he had given, and some time after he gave me a copy of an Instruction he had from the Secretary of State—but which had not been directed to me. I am glad the public affairs are placed in the hands of those who are surely more able to manage them than I can pretend to be. What orders I had given before were in exact compliance with Lord Grenville's letter sent to me by the Admiralty. . . .¹

The British Government, irritated at Russia's interference with our Danish negotiations, had decided to break the Malta Agreement, and, in view of the existing treaties between Russia and Naples, had considered it inexpedient to communicate the decision to anyone but Abercromby. It is not improbable that its effect eventually on our relations with the Court of Naples was all for the best—certainly for Naples. Russia had undertaken by treaty the defence of Naples, and the Austrian collapse had made Russian friendship indispensable now. The intervention of the Czar secured for Naples an armistice in February, and on 28th March 1801 her treaty of peace with France was signed at Florence.

Had Nelson not already returned home, a different line of conduct would almost certainly have been pursued, ending possibly in the isolation and overthrow of the Neapolitan Court. Nelson, however, and the Hamiltons had accompanied the Queen of Naples to Vienna, proceeding thence

¹ Keith to Paget, 16th October 1800.

to England ; and in communicating the news of Malta to Lady Hamilton, the Queen of Naples very temperately states the mortification of her Court : ' . . . Our being so completely duped is the subject of laughter here [*i.e.* at Schönbrunn], and the injury is so much the more painful coming from a friend, otherwise it would be nothing. We are so much the friends of England that we are pleased that great friendly Power should hold a post overlooking Sicily ; but the neglect of forms, and the slights shewn to us after so much care, confidence, cordiality, assistance, and the enormous expenses we have been put to, are very painful to think of—that is the truth ! Oh ! how often have I thought, if my friends had been there this would not have happened. . . . ' ¹

As for Russia, the effect there was sensational ; but consideration must meanwhile be given to the discussions which had for some time been going on relative to the Rights of Neutrals.

(c) THE ARMED NEUTRALITY OF THE NORTH

The claims of neutrals in warfare necessarily involve diplomatic discussion, the tone of which tends to vary with the relative strength of the respective nations. Where the point at issue has been some breach of the recognised Law of Nations, such as, for example, the infringement of territorial waters, the existing machinery of International Law rarely fails to provide the Foreign Offices with the means for arriving at an amicable settlement. In the ever-changing circumstances of maritime warfare, however, no question has given rise to more international discord than the ' right of

¹ Queen of Naples to Lady Hamilton, 17th October 1800.

search,' with its precedents evolved, more or less, out of the expediency of the moment.

It is not unnatural that the Russian outlook in matters relating to sea-borne trade should differ from our own, whose ports are open to the ocean and whose trade is shepherded by our fleet. Approach to the Russian ports being possible only through the bottle-necks of the Sound or the Dardanelles, not unnaturally Russian trade in war-time operates, if allowed to operate at all, with a very circumspect regard to International Law as interpreted by the custodians of the Straits. However, for Russia the complete cessation of sea-borne trade would be, in war-time, a matter of minor importance; for Britain, its maintenance and even its expansion is dictated by the highest necessities of the Nation, whose very existence depends on it.

It will hardly be surprising, therefore, to find the Baltic Nations in mutual agreement with an International Maritime Code dictated by the geographical configuration which makes the Baltic practically an inland sea, or to find them frequently at variance with the Atlantic Nations whose ocean trade has been entrusted to the care of their Navies rather than their International Lawyers.

Mutual support for the enforcement of respect for their Agreements had leagued the Baltic Nations together, and had once already resulted in the Armed Neutrality of the North. Events were now rapidly tending towards its revival.

A collection of the Diplomatic Notes which now began to pass unceasingly between the various Foreign Secretaries will be found in the 'Documentary History of the Armed Neutralities, 1780 and 1800,' by Sir Francis Piggott and

G. W. T. Omond (London, 1919). Even this collection, however, is very incomplete, for the quill was being driven at high speed. Perhaps it would be best to pass over the wordy warfare in which the Foreign Office was becoming hopelessly involved : it is one thing to lay down the law, loudly proclaiming it for all to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest ; to apply it in actual practice is another thing entirely. Indeed, the First Lord went so far as to write to the Foreign Secretary : ' . . . I wish to suggest for your consideration whether it might not be as well to give some secret hint to our cruisers not to be very particular in looking out for neutral convoys for the present ; this may be done without compromising our principle, and it may be as well to run as little chance as we can of involving ourselves more deeply in this imbroglio, at least for this year.' ¹

On 25th July, Captain (afterwards Vice-Admiral Sir) Thomas Baker, in command of H.M.S. *Nemesis*, in company with H.M. Ships *Terpsichore*, *La Prevoyant*, *Arrow* and *Nile*, lugger, of the Downs flotilla, had fallen in with the frigate 'Freya' and her convoy, and proceeded to board to examine them in accordance with his Instructions. The Dane protested, resisted, and, firing to enforce his resistance, killed a man on H.M.S. *Nemesis*. Whereupon Baker gave the Dane his whole broadside, crippled him, and when, after twenty-five minutes' action, he struck his colours, brought the 'Freya' and convoy into the Downs.

This was the culminating point of many similar incidents and was clearly indicative of the situation that would arise if Naval Officers rigidly stood by the orders embodying their respective Foreign

¹ Spencer to Grenville, 1st August 1800.

Offices' views on International Maritime Law. The sensation caused by the latest incident was too great to permit of the matter being left on its present footing, and it was accordingly decided to send a Mission to Copenhagen 'in order to give the greater weight to His Majesty's representations on this subject, and to afford at the same time the means of such explanations respecting it, as may avert the necessity of those extremities to which His Majesty looks with the greatest reluctance.' Lord Whitworth, lately our Ambassador at St. Petersburg and now raised to the peerage, was entrusted with this mission, and to support his position Dickson and the North Sea Squadron proceeded off Copenhagen. The atmosphere in which the negotiations were conducted is well indicated in a letter dated 14th September 1800, printed in the *Naval Chronicle*, and written on the return of the Squadron to Yarmouth.

I shall begin by informing you, that we sailed from Yarmouth with the ships and vessels named in the margin (Monarch, Glatton, Polyphemus, Ardent, Veteran, Romney, Isis, Waakzaamheid, and Martin; Volcano, Hecla, Sulphur, and Zebra, bombs; Boxer, Furious, Griper, Swinger, and Haughty, gun-vessels) on the 9th of August, at 7 in the morning; we had a fair wind, though but little of it during our passage; nevertheless, by ordering the fast sailing ships to tow the slow sailing ones, we reached the Skaw on the 15th following, having previously dispatched Sir Home Popham, in the Romney, to advance as high as to the entrance of the Sound, for the purpose of procuring intelligence of the strength and position of the Danes, and for forwarding such dispatches as he might meet with from Lord Whitworth.

On the 14th we had received information, that 3 sail of Danish 74-gun ships were moored with springs on their cables, across the narrowest part of the Sound,

extending from Cronberg Castle to the Swedish shore ; and that the guardship (a frigate of 40 guns) was moored so as to defend that flank of their line next the Castle.

On the 16th, at 4 o'clock in the morning, the whole of the Squadron was advanced as high as the Kholt ; it blew hard at N.W., which wind is directly through the Sound, and it would appear the Admiral's orders were not to enter it.

On Saturday the 17th, a Danish 74-gun ship passed through the Squadron and proceeded to Elsineur, where she took her station in the line : for two days, during a hard gale of wind at N.W., did the Squadron continue to beat against it, and by great exertions nearly held its ground : but it continuing to blow with equal violence on the third day, and the Ardent and Glatton (two bad sailing ships) being in a very dangerous and critical situation, and the masters, pilots, and others in the fleet, having already declared that the Sound afforded no anchorage for the Squadron, the Admiral dispatched a letter to Sir Home Popham of the Romney (who, on account of the gale, had entered the Sound) desiring him to apprise Lord Whitworth and the Danish Commodore of his intention to proceed to Elsineur : a situation the Admiral chose for three reasons (I apprehend) : first, to afford security and protection to the British trade in the Baltic ; secondly, for safety to the squadron ; and, lastly, by his actual presence, to give weight to the negotiations Lord Whitworth was charged with. With this view the Admiral caused the Squadron to bear up on the 19th for Elsineur : it proceeded accordingly to the Sound, in which it anchored at 3 P.M. and rode in safety, notwithstanding the pilots had asserted it to be impossible. The Admiral stopped here for the purpose of making his arrangements for passing the Castle and the Danish Squadron, in the event of hostile proceedings on their part ; but he had scarcely anchored, before he received a very polite letter from Commodore Leiken, commanding the Danish ships, inviting him, in the name of his King, to come to Elsineur Roads.

I shall not take upon me to decide, whether this

measure was dictated by sincerity, or whether it was an act arising from necessity, on the part of the Danish Court ; but I fancy it did away a difficulty in the Admiral's orders. Here Sir Home Popham went on board the flagship ; the Admiral also received dispatches from Lord Whitworth, requesting him to come to Elsinour. He now determined to put his plan into execution ; directions were therefore given this evening, accompanied by an order of anchorage, for the ships to weigh separately on the succeeding morning, and passing the Fort and Danish line, to anchor above them, agreeably to the prescribed order : in the morning the Admiral went on board the Romney, and passing very near the Castle, proceeded about 12 miles up, and anchored off Sophienberg, in expectation of seeing Lord Whitworth ; but his Lordship being engaged with the Danish Ministers this day, could not meet him. He went the next, when he met his Lordship, when a plan of co-operation was agreed upon, in consequence of which the Romney advanced to Copenhagen, and four bombs and two gun-vessels occupied the intermediate space between the ship and the Squadron, for the purpose of communication, which, by means of a telegraph established by Sir Home Popham, was both rapid and correct. Matters being carried thus far by way of demonstration, the Danish Court, which at first treated with ridicule our pretensions, began to see things in a serious point of view ; it had enquired, and found that our vessels chosen for communication were composed of bombs, placed also in a situation to bombard the city of Copenhagen, and the Squadron advanced, so as to be able to protect and cover them, in the execution of such service.

On the 22nd, the Danish men-of-war seeing themselves cut off, made a movement, anchored above the British Squadron, and moored up and down the channel leading to Copenhagen : they gave as a reason for this movement, that they had anchored on bad holding ground ; the Admiral therefore pleaded the same excuse, and made a counter-movement, and placed the Squadron

in its relative position to that of the Danish ships ; but from the numbers, we were much advanced above them, and in a situation to cut them off as effectually as at first, without the fear of being annoyed by the fort.

On the 24th the Danish ships made another movement, which the Admiral intended in the evening to counteract, and weighed for that purpose, but they again got under sail, and ran higher up. As enough had been done, I apprehend, by way of demonstration, I conclude the Admiral intended to let them rest here ; but their movements and the several positions they had taken, were merely feints to disguise their real intentions, for the next day they ran up to Copenhagen, passed the Romney, and moored across the harbour. The Danish Court now held a different language ; it came to terms, and matters were amicably adjusted.

The result of the negotiations was a Convention of 29th August 1800, by which it was agreed to refer the question of the ' right of search,' as it affected neutral ships under convoy, to a Conference which it was proposed should meet shortly in London.

However, much was to happen before the Conference could meet. Upon intelligence of our movement against Copenhagen, the Czar had laid an embargo on British shipping and ordered the sequestration of British capital in Russia. This news followed hard on that of Marengo, and continental affairs began to assume a dangerous aspect.

In regard to the Mission to Denmark, ' as Lord Spencer, at the Admiralty, thought the time inopportune for proceeding to extremities, a compromise was patched up, which delayed an open rupture but settled nothing.' ¹ As for Russia, we are told that Pitt had an uneasy sense of a storm

¹ Historical MSS. Commission, *Dropmore Papers*, vol. vi. p. lix.

brewing in the North, and suggested to the Foreign Office the desirability of our Secretary of Legation at Berlin proceeding to St. Petersburg, unofficially, but with dormant credentials—a suggestion recommended also by Carysfort at Berlin.

Unhappily our Maltese policy complicated the issue. The surrender of Malta was imminent; questions were already being raised as to Abercromby's Instructions which it was inconvenient to answer. On 5th September Malta fell, and our Ambassador at Berlin, through whose hands all the affairs of the North were passing, was cautioned against being drawn into any conversation about Malta, and above all not to allow himself to be made the channel of anything like official communications or representations from Petersburg on this delicate subject. 'It is one advantage,' wrote the Foreign Secretary, 'which we derive (in common with many inconveniences) from the Emperor's absurd measure of breaking off all official intercourse with us, that he will not know how to communicate with us on this subject, without treading back some of his steps. . . .'¹

The hope that the Czar might open up correspondence with London, thereby 'treading back some of his steps,' was not, however, fated to be realised. On 6th January 1801 Italinsky acquainted our Minister at Palermo that General Baron Sprengporten had received the Czar's directions to proceed to Malta with his troops, as a garrison, in conformity with the Convention of 1798. Paget replied to the best of his ability. His drift, however, was sufficiently plain—actually orders had been issued on 24th October for the Russians to be absolutely excluded. In due course, the

¹ Grenville to Carysfort, 9th October 1800.

Czar's commands came for the Russians at Naples to return home, via the Black Sea. He had thrown over the Alliance and was entering into negotiations with France.

Everything now turned upon the personality of the Czar, and his ability to carry Neutrals and Allies along with him. As Grenville wrote to Carysfort (7th November 1800): ' . . . The business of Malta will serve to exasperate the Emperor still more, and if he does us no harm, he certainly will not try to do us any good.' It became known that Bonaparte, with the knowledge that the fall of Malta was imminent, had actually offered to put Russia in possession of it, and that Sprengporten had proceeded to France, to organise the Russian prisoners of war there, whom it was proposed to send on garrison duty to Malta. That the British breach of faith had been suspected at St. Petersburg is undoubtable; none the less, that it came as a shock is manifest, and the news is stated to have so affected the Czar, who was afflicted with madness, as to endanger his life. Russian preparations were now begun systematically in anticipation of the coming rupture; steps were taken to revive the Armed Neutrality, and everything pointed to the complete isolation of this country. Carysfort's information was: 'There is on foot not only a plot for renewing the Armed Neutrality against us, but also a league of the Northern Powers, Denmark, Sweden, Russia, and Prussia, for a mediation of a general peace. . . . Russia, however, proposes to invite to the League of Mediation the accession of Saxony and Hesse-Cassel, but expressly to exclude Hanover. . . .'¹ Further, Kalitscheff, the Russian Vice-Chancellor,

¹ Carysfort to Grenville, 19th November 1800.

arrived at Paris on a mission, the significance of which could not be mistaken.

On 7th December 1800 the First Consul had announced, 'that the French Government, having principally at heart to oppose the invasion of the seas and to concur with Neutral Powers in causing their flags to be respected, and appreciating the truly patriotic zeal of the Emperor of Russia for the common cause of all Continental Powers, will not treat for peace with England until, these sacred principles having been recognised, the Russian, Danish, Swedish, American, and Prussian flags shall be respected on the sea as the armies of these Powers are on land, and until England shall have acknowledged that the sea belongs to all nations.' On 20th January 1801, on hearing of the British embargo on Russian vessels, the First Consul forbade forthwith any captures of Russian ships, declaring that he regarded the Republic as already at peace with the Czar, and attributed only to the great distance which separated the two countries the delay in the formal signature of a treaty.¹

On 15th January the Czar had dispatched Kalitscheff to Paris to treat definitely for peace.

The first steps, however, of the Armed Neutrality aroused greater alarm than the events that had brought it into being. Under cover of a protest against our carrying into the port of Cuxhaven the Prussian Triton, a merchantman, under arrest as a prize, Prussia set her troops in motion and occupied the port. Her annexation of Hanover might with confidence be expected. Danish alarm was immediate. With the approach of war, the danger became very real of her central

¹ *The Cambridge Modern History*, ix. 47.

position making her the meeting-ground in the clash of arms. Sweden was equally alarmed, and it was Carysfort's opinion that 'if it were possible, without departing from the principles necessary to the preservation of our maritime power, to give some new security to these people for their fair trade, it would completely, and at once, *dérouter* all the plans of Paul and Haugwitz.

The suggestion, however well founded, was not attractive to our Government. The Neutral Powers were allowing themselves to be bullied into action, to pull Paul's Malta chestnut out of the fire; and in our opinion a little counter-bullying—the adoption of a stiff attitude—would have a salutary effect. To retrace our steps and go back on the principles laid down in the discussion on the 'right of search' was not considered either expedient or compatible with our dignity.

. . . It may not always be necessary to put all these principles forward, where (as in the present case) the matter in dispute is otherwise arranged; but there can never be any advantage in doing or saying anything that shall appear to abandon them.

Depend upon it that when you have known these people as long as, for my sins, I have known them, you will be persuaded with me that they consider all concession not as moderation but as weakness, and that, just in proportion as they crouch to France because she bullies them, they will attempt to bully us if they think us afraid of them.

Our means are ample; the country is in good heart; the distress for provisions is the only real difficulty with which we have to contend. . . . I am every day more and more convinced that nothing will operate on the foolish prejudices of these people but the conviction that they have as much to lose by our shutting them out from the sea as we can lose by their excluding us

from the land. If we give way to them we may as well disarm our navy at once, and determine to cede without further contest all we have taken as a counterbalance to the continental acquisitions of France, for such you may rely on it will be the tendency of their plan of peace. The conduct of Russia has (in this respect) fortunately enabled us to shut the door to all such discussions, and to tell Prussia that any confederacy with Petersburg now is a confederacy with our enemy, and cannot therefore be the ground of any friendly mediation. From this ground it is important not to let them drive us. . . .¹

Accordingly, Notes were addressed to the Neutral Powers individually, warning them that if they adhered to the principles of the Armed Neutrality of Russia, Britain would consider it as a declaration of war on their part. Meanwhile, the Conference fixed by the Convention of Copenhagen was suspended.

I feel very confident [wrote Grenville] that this line will answer our purpose and immediate peace; but, if it does not, it is very evident that no better result would follow from taking a lower tone, and we should only disgrace ourselves in the eyes of Europe. . . . I really believe, if they drive us to extremities, and we are on the point of considering ourselves as so driven with respect to them all, though some temporary inconvenience and alarm will arise as to our commerce, we shall give more animation to the feelings of the Country, and go on, upon the whole, quite as easily as we should without it.'²

The Notes were presented by Carysfort on the 28th December to the Ministers of the Neutral Courts at Berlin; and the state of the negotiations was brought before the country in the King's

¹ Grenville to Carysfort, 2nd December 1800.

² *Ibid.*, 16th December 1800.

Speech at the dissolution of Parliament, on the last day of the year, in which it was stated :

. . . The detention of the property of My subjects in the ports of Russia, contrary to the most solemn treaties, and the imprisonment of British sailors in that Country, has excited in Me sentiments in which you and all My subjects will, I am sure, participate. I have already taken such steps as this occasion indispensably required ; but if it shall become necessary to maintain, against any combination, the honour and independence of the British Empire, and those maritime rights and interests on which both our prosperity and our security must always essentially depend, I entertain no doubt either of the success of those means which, in such an event, I shall be enabled to exert, or of the determination of My Parliament and My People to afford Me a support proportioned to the importance of the interests which We have to maintain.

Though the information had not yet reached London, the Neutral Powers had acceded to the Convention which was signed at St. Petersburg on 16th December 1800 on behalf of Sweden and Denmark, and on the 17th by Prussia. The ratification at Copenhagen took place on the 16th January 1801. The definite news only reached London on the 13th January, on the authority of the Danish Minister for Foreign Affairs, to whom a categorical question as to the fact had been put. War had been threatened in the event of the avowal, and war it was now to be.

Convinced, as I long have been [writes Mr. T. Grenville], that this contest was threatened to us, I rejoice that we find such good British spirit in the Country, upon this great and important subject. No negotiation could have ensured us against it : it is a matter upon which Sir H. Parker and Lord Nelson will be our best plenipotentiaries, as soon as the Baltic will thaw enough

to receive them and their retinues. Our Government feel as they ought, and I have no doubt will act vigorously and successfully. . . .¹

On 14th January 1801 an Order in Council was issued placing an embargo on all Russian, Swedish, and Danish vessels in our ports, and the necessary orders to the Fleet were prepared. The King's covering minute approving these was discovered by Dean Pellew amongst Addington's papers, and printed by him in his 'Life of Sidmouth.'

Queen's House, 15th January 1801.

The present situation of this kingdom with the Northern Powers requires every degree of exertion. I therefore most fully approve of the drafts Mr. Secretary Dundas has proposed to the Admiralty. . . . There is no question that has occurred in the present war on which my mind is more fixed than on the one now depending with the Northern Courts. I have long wished to bring it to an issue, and have not admired the constant attempt for above twenty years to avoid it, which has only on the present occasion brought it forward with more force: but if properly withstood we must get the better, and truly, if we do not, the boasted power of Great Britain, as a maritime state, is entirely delusive. If this will not rouse men, we are fallen low indeed.

(d) PITT'S RESIGNATION

As has already been stated, St. Vincent was at this moment at Tor Abbey, his trunk packed, in momentary expectation of receiving orders to come up to town for consultation. Much was to

¹ Mr. T. Grenville to Marquess of Buckingham, 13th January 1801.

happen before that event, and the whole aspect of affairs, international and domestic, was to alter. Austria had been overwhelmed at Hohenlinden. Following upon Marengo, peace negotiations had been opened up, though with little sincerity. Marengo itself had been nearly lost by Napoleon—until won by Desaix, and the Austrians had been in little dread of the next encounter. On 3rd December 1800, however, Moreau utterly defeated the Archduke John. The Austrian collapse was complete. On Christmas Day the Armistice of Steyer was signed; followed, on 9th February 1801, by the Peace of Lunéville.

In the midst of the excitement naturally aroused by the news came the sudden announcement that Pitt had resigned. With the war about to take a critical turn, his resignation was followed by that of the heads of the Foreign Office and War Departments; others followed fast.

The sceptical attitude of the Public is not to be wondered at. Concentrating its attention on the threatening aspect of foreign affairs, it displayed little interest in the mysterious statements by politicians of a religious crisis. The view became widely held that the Irish question had been magnified deliberately, to provide the Government with an excuse for withdrawing from office before the continental situation should render their position untenable. Such are the foundations upon which political reputations are built, that Pitt in many quarters was held to have added considerably to his reputation as a party leader, by having 'got out' at the favourable moment, leaving to his successor the inevitable unpopularity which would attach to the forthcoming peace terms and their effect on the constituencies. This view obtained in circles normally

quite well informed; and on 9th March, whilst the Regency proposal made it still a matter of uncertainty whether the Addington Administration would actually supplant Pitt's Government, Malmesbury notes in his Diary some remarks made by Dundas:

... 'After all (said Dundas, very unadvisedly; probably unintentionally), if these new Ministers stay in and make Peace, it will only smooth matters the more for us afterwards.' This betrayed a good deal, and struck Pelham's mind, as it did mine when he told it me, that from the beginning there has ever been some second and back view in all this; and that really what appears in the French Papers and in ours, has some degree of truth, viz¹ that Pitt went out because he felt himself incapable of carrying on the War, or of making Peace.

And Auckland, voicing the same uneasy suspicion in the Lords, found himself severely brought to heel by the party. 'There was something *behind* in all this he could not comprehend,' he is reported as saying; 'some mysterious motives (*honourable* motives, he did not doubt) that were the cause of it, since without some such explanation, their throwing up office was like a general getting into a post-chaise and leaving his army in the middle of a battle.'

Vansittart found the same feeling existing abroad. 'Prince Charles [of Hesse] . . . was persuaded (which I find very general on the Continent) that the late change in Administration was nothing more than a concerted plan to bring about a peace; and he spoke with high admiration of Mr. Pitt and Lord Grenville.'¹ To which we may perhaps add the opinion of

¹ Vansittart to Addington, 5th March 1801.

Elliot, our Minister at Dresden and brother of Lord Minto, to whom Auckland in his sorrow had sent a copy of his much-abused speech in the Lords :

You will easily conceive how perfectly mysterious and unintelligible the secret arrangements in Government in Great Britain must be to a person who has passed so great a proportion of his time abroad as I have done. In the course of nearly 30 years' service in the diplomatic career, I have witnessed so many changes, both in domestic and foreign politics, that I have certainly attained one of the qualities which Horace quotes as appropriate to a wise man—*nil admirari*—to be surprised at nothing. Another axiom, of my own, will perhaps not be admitted by you to the extent I give it, viz^t that the abilities of public men in England are very much upon a level, and that when they in their turn are called upon to guide the helm of state, they will all pretty near hold the same course, and only be carried some degrees quicker or slower down the irresistible stream of events, whose real direction comes, I hope, from above, and which no human force or contrivance can stem.¹

¹ Elliot to Auckland, 1st June 1801.



THE BALTIC

ADMIRAL SIR HYDE PARKER

VICE-ADMIRAL LORD NELSON

AND

THE NORTH SEA

ADMIRAL ARCHIBALD DICKSON



I. INTRODUCTION

THE Baltic Fleet sailed on 12th March. But previous to its sailing, the British Government had availed itself of what appeared to be a sort of overture from the Prince of Hesse, rather than allow all hope of an amicable settlement to pass away, and Vansittart had been dispatched to Copenhagen upon a secret mission. This was on 17th February, following upon the return of the King's Messenger from his round of the Northern Courts, bringing with him a batch of cheerless reports. In the meanwhile, every effort had been made to expedite the date of sailing of the fleet. The appointments of Sir Hyde Parker, as Commander-in-Chief, and Lord Nelson, as Second-in-Command, had been publicly announced in the Press of 27th January, by Spencer's Board. On 24th February, orders were sent to Dickson to put himself under Parker's command; and on 26th February, Parker himself left town to take up his command. He hoisted his flag at Great Yarmouth on 28th February in H.M.S. Ardent, pending the arrival there of H.M.S. London, his flagship.

On 2nd March H.M.S. St. George and the Portsmouth ships left for the North Sea, Nelson having embarked Lieutenant-Colonel Stewart, with a detachment of the 49th Regiment (about 760 men, under Lieutenant-Colonel Brock), and 100

Riflemen, under Captain Sidney Beckwith. They arrived at Yarmouth on the 8th. 'Since the arrival of His Lordship here,' wrote the Yarmouth correspondent of *The Times*, 'we have been in one continual bustle.'

Without waiting for his Rear-Admirals, Parker got away on the 12th; Graves, from Portsmouth, in H.M.S. Defence joined at sea, on the 17th; Totty, from Sheerness, in H.M.S. Invincible, reached Yarmouth on the 15th, and pushed on next day. The Invincible, however, got aground on Hammonds Knowle and foundered, with heavy loss of life.

Public interest in the expedition had been raised to a high pitch. The last report of the Fleet was brought by the Prince of Wales Packet, which reported speaking the Fleet at sea, steering N.E. for the Baltic with the heaviest sailing ships in tow. A period of silence was to intervene, and for a month practically nothing reached the public of its movements.

The position of George III as Elector of Hanover was giving some anxiety, and it was not expected that a Prussian move would be long delayed. On 1st March H.R.H. Prince Adolphus, 7th son of George III, and Commander-in-Chief of the Hanoverian troops, arrived at Berlin from Hanover to consult with Carysfort and obtain some idea of Prussia's intentions. Meanwhile, the Regency of Hanover issued a declaration that His Britannic Majesty would not, in his quality as Elector of Hanover, take any part in the dispute with the Northern Powers, and that the British would not receive any assistance whatever from the Electorate.

On 30th March the King of Prussia issued his Proclamation, declaring that he was compelled

‘to take the most efficacious measures in support of the Convention attacked, and to retaliate for the hostile proceedings against it.’ Accordingly, the mouths of the Elbe, Weser, and Ems were shut against us, and Prussian troops proceeded to occupy Hanover. This possibility had long been foreseen; and Prince Adolphus, whose creation as Duke of Cambridge in the English Peerage had been foreshadowed, thereupon withdrew from Hanover and returned to England.

Concurrently with Prussia’s action, the Danes occupied Hamburg.

On 4th April Vansittart arrived in London from his mission to Copenhagen. He and Drummond, our Minister at the Court of Denmark, had come home in the ‘Kite,’ cutter, and it was announced in the Press that they had left Sir Hyde Parker and the fleet on the evening of the 23rd March, all well, lying-to off Kullen Point, on the S.W. coast of Sweden, near the entrance of the Sound, having passed the Cattegat.

Sir Hyde Parker, on arriving off the Scaw on the 19th, had sent the *Blanche* on to Copenhagen, with Lord Hawkesbury’s dispatches, and on the 22nd, in the evening, she had returned with Vansittart and Drummond on board, Vansittart ‘having been dismissed from the Court of Denmark without the smallest communication with the Minister, but on the contrary with particular haughtiness.’¹ Vansittart had thereupon delivered to Parker the following communication, dated 21st March:

Since the Note which Mr. Drummond and I had the honour of addressing you this morning, I have to inform you that Mr. Drummond this morning received

¹ Parker to the Secretary of the Admiralty, 23rd March.

from Count Bernstoff a Note enclosing a Passport for him.

This proceeding, accompanied by the repeated refusal of the Court of Copenhagen to acknowledge the character with which His Majesty has been pleased to trust us, may be considered as equivalent to a Declaration of War.

You will therefore consider all Negociation as at an end, and proceed to execute such Instructions as you have received.

It was upon Vansittart's report and the letters he brought from Parker, that St. Vincent wrote to Sir Hyde, on the 5th April: 'I have the satisfaction of knowing that you are placed in the most happy and enviable situation; no negociations to retard your operations and a scene of glory immortal before you. . . .' The formal orders to commence hostilities were now issued: Vansittart's arrival in town was on Saturday morning and *The Times* records that 'The Clerks in the Admiralty were kept at their Office till 2 o'clock on Sunday morning, copying instructions and papers; and the same day seven Post Office expresses were sent off to the different Ports. . . .'

On Monday, 6th April, George Rose called upon Addington and notes in his Diary a conversation with the Prime Minister upon the naval situation.

In speaking of the Danish business, he expressed himself sanguinely. I answered, I was sure that what could be done by man would be executed by the two admirals who commanded: he observed that Lord Nelson was the most likely to strike a great blow, though both were good, on which I reminded him of the distinguished courage, and still more remarkable presence of mind, of Sir Hyde Parker, when he forced the passage

of the North River, above New York, early in the American War, under circumstances as trying to an officer as ever happened in a hazardous enterprize. Mr. Addington said he was then almost thirty years younger : that he should prefer him to command the great fleet in the Channel, but that for such a service as that at Copenhagen he should prefer Lord Nelson : from whence I infer that Sir Hyde has stated to Ministers some greater difficulties in the way of destroying the Danish fleet than were expected. . . .

This was actually the case. Parker had shied at Copenhagen, and had decided not to face the passage of the Sound, but to go round through the Great Belt and make for Revel and the Russian Fleet. In his letter of 23rd March to the Admiralty, he had written :

Since writing my letter of this morning's date I have had recourse to a consultation with Vice Admiral Lord Nelson and Mr. Vansittart on the very formidable defence the Danes have made against any attack being made upon them, not only by many additional Batteries at Cronenburgh Castle, but also the number of Hulks and Batteries which have been placed and erected for the defence of the Arsenal at Copenhagen and renders the attack so hazardous, joined to the difficulty of the navigation by the passage of the Sound, as led us to agree in opinion that it will be more beneficial for His Majesty's service to attempt the passage of the Great Belt, which having passed, and the wind favourable for going up the Baltic is, to attempt the destruction of the Russian Ships at Revel which are expected as soon as the season will permit their coming down the Baltic to co-operate with the Danes ; but in the event of the wind being contrary for going up the Baltic, after having passed the Belt, in this case to attempt destroying Copenhagen by coming down the passage from the Baltic. This measure will be attacking them in the rear, where it is evident they do not expect an attack,

nor is it in their power to render it so defensible as by the other channel.

My intention is, should I be so fortunate as either to meet the Russian Squadron on their passage down, or at Revel, the moment either service is performed, to return immediately to the object of Copenhagen; and I trust, great as the responsibility I take upon myself, Their Lordships will do me the justice to believe that I could only be actuated by what appears to be, for the great object my Country has in view, consistent with the peculiar situation I find myself in by the formidable disposition of Copenhagen, and which cannot be known to their Lordships.

I therefore rely with confidence on their approbation. . . .

The Copenhagen objective he still had in mind, but the Commander-in-Chief obviously wished to avoid the attack, if possible: Nelson, on the other hand, was all for an attack and at the earliest practicable moment. Not very much is known of the discussions that took place between Parker and Nelson; but on 8th April 1801 Vansittart wrote to Nelson from London:

. . . I got to town on Saturday, and went immediately to the Admiralty, but not finding Lord St. Vincent in town, I called on Mr. Addington, to whom I gave a full account of what had passed in Sir Hyde Parker's cabin on the 23rd ulto. . . . Mr. Addington has since communicated the whole affair to Lord St. Vincent, who equally acquiesces in the propriety of the determination, so that whatever may be the event of the plan (which Providence must decide) you will have the satisfaction of meeting with the approbation of those who have the best right to judge of it; and I need not say, may depend on the confidence of the public. . . .

Colonel Stewart in his Narrative¹ has given an

¹ *Nicolas*, iv. 300.

account of the proceedings of the Fleet, following on the departure of Vansittart. On the 25th, 'the wind was again strong and favourable, and expectation was alive that we should have sailed through the Sound on the 25th; it was, however, generally understood that the formidable reports which had been made by Mr. Vansittart, and by the Pilots whom we had brought with us, as to the state of the batteries of Elsineur, and of the defensive situation of Copenhagen, induced the Commander-in-Chief to prefer the circuitous passage by the Great Belt. Lord Nelson, who was impatient for action, was not much deterred by these alarming representations: his object was to go to Copenhagen, and he said "Let it be by the Sound, by the Belt, or anyhow, only lose not an hour." On the 26th the whole Fleet accordingly sailed for the Great Belt: but after proceeding for a few leagues along the coast of Zealand, the plan was suddenly changed. This arose partly in consequence of some suggestions from Captain George Murray of the *Edgar*, who was to have led the Fleet through the intricate channels, partly on account of some difficulty appearing in our course (one or two of the smaller craft being on the rocks), but chiefly at the instigation of Lord Nelson, who went on board the *London* about 10 A.M. Be the reasons as they may, the Fleet returned to its former anchorage before sunset.'

It would appear that Captain Otway of H.M.S. *London*, the Fleet flagship, had argued Parker round. In his letter of 6th April 1801 to the Admiralty, Parker wrote:

You will be pleased to acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that, since my Letter of

22 March,¹ I have reconsidered and weighed all the circumstances attending my going through the passage of the Belt with His Majesty's Fleet under my command ; and although I still think, had we had the good fortune to have made a short passage through, Copenhagen might have been attacked from that side, with much less risk to the Fleet ; yet the objections and obstacles were so many, by subjecting our communication to be cut off, by the Danes sending out two or three ships of the line with frigates, and taking positions and covering them with batteries on the Islands in the narrow passages of the navigation of the Belt, as to render their being forced very difficult, more especially by anything coming from England.

This and the danger which must have ensued from the want of Pilots in so intricate a navigation with such a considerable Fleet, Captain Murray of H.M.S. Edgar and one Pilot being the only two people to be found in the Fleet who had ever been through that passage—these reasons acted so forcibly on my mind, as to induce me to give up that plan, and determined me on the passage of the Sound. . . .

The remainder of this dispatch of 6th April contains the narrative of the bombardment of Copenhagen as communicated to the *London Gazette*, after slight alteration by the Admiralty. Parker had sent away Captain Otway with his dispatches whilst the issue of the negotiations was still in doubt ; indeed, further operations were pending at the moment. ' . . . Despairing that any accommodation is likely to take place I have thought right to dispatch the Cruizer, brig, with my dispatches. The Bombs are placed and will immediately commence their operations upon the answer to the last Note of mine not being complied with. . . . '

¹ Should be 23rd March.

The impression conveyed by Parker was that he was adopting a very stiff attitude in his negotiations, and this was thoroughly in accord with the views of the Cabinet. Every possible step was taken to give expression to the country's gratification: the Thanks of the House of Parliament were voted; and in an official letter of congratulation, dated 16th April, the Secretary of the Admiralty wrote that the First Lord had laid the Dispatch before the King, and

His Lordship has informed the Board that His Majesty was graciously pleased to express and command that it be signified to you in the strongest terms His perfect approbation of the very able and judicious disposition of the force under your command and His highest satisfaction in the account you have given of the gallant behaviour of all the officers and men who were in the action, assuring you at the same time of the great concern His Majesty feels at the loss of so many brave officers and men as have fallen on this occasion. And I have in consequence Their Lordships' commands to signify the same to you accordingly, and that it is also His Majesty's pleasure that you should in the manner you shall judge most proper acquaint all the officers and men, especially Vice Admiral Lord Nelson and Rear Admiral Graves and the Hon. Lieutenant Colonel Stewart and the Captains particularly noticed in yours and the Vice Admiral's letters, with the just sense His Majesty entertains of the zeal and courage they have so eminently exerted in His Service. Their Lordships command me to send you their congratulations on the honour you have acquired on the occasion, to which I beg to add mine. . . .

On the 20th April further dispatches were received from the Fleet, brought this time by Colonel Stewart, the officer commanding the

troops and one of the signatories of the Armistice. Parker's letter, dated 9th April, was as follows :

The Honble. Lieut. Colonel Stewart having volunteered his services by being the bearer of these Dispatches, I have accepted thereof, on a belief that it will be more expeditious than by sea, joined to the difficulty of sparing a vessel for that service at this moment.

By Captain Otway, who sailed from hence the 6th instant in H.M. Brig Cruizer, I had the honour to enclose, for Their Lordships' information, the Papers which had passed between me and the Secretary for Foreign Affairs of the Court of Denmark. At the same time expressing my doubts of being able to make any amicable arrangement.

I have now the pleasure to transmit an Armistice concluded between the Court of Denmark and myself, which I trust, although not strictly adhering to the letter of my instructions, will upon mature consideration be found consonant to the spirit of them, by the Danes having renounced the operation of the Armed Neutrality and made themselves neuter for a space of time, in which we may be able to complete our future operations in the Baltic, and be secured from hostile operations in our rear. And I believe I may venture to assert that not an officer in this fleet but has his doubt how far the operation of bombs could destroy the Arsenal and Ships of war. In the failure of this object, we should only have increased the resentment, and attached the Danes more firmly to the Coalition, and, of course, to resist our passage to the Baltic, which from the nature of its navigation, it was very easy for them to do.

Having been guided by motives of humanity and the best of my judgment, for the good of my Country and the King's Service, in laying dormant an enemy who might have rendered the execution of our future operations very difficult, and in the doubt of not being able to fulfil the object of the destruction of the Arsenal and ships, by the attempt of which the Bombs, or the

greater part of them, would, probably, have been rendered useless for the rest of the campaign.

When therefore Their Lordships take all these circumstances into consideration, I trust I shall have the particular gratification of their approval of my conduct.

Colonel Stewart, on his arrival, would appear to have opened himself very frankly to the authorities on the subject of Sir Hyde Parker. There appears to be no question that it was upon his representation that the decision was taken to recall Sir Hyde. On the 21st April, the day following Stewart's arrival, orders were sent for Sir Hyde to hand over the command of the fleet to Lord Nelson, and return home.

The following morning Rose breakfasted with St. Vincent, and he notes in his diary, 22nd April :

His Lordship entered on the late glorious victory at Copenhagen, and told me the merit of the attack rested solely with Lord Nelson, as Sir Hyde Parker had been decidedly adverse to the attempt being made, and was over-ruled only by the perseverance and firmness of the former ; and that in the middle of the action Sir Hyde had made the signal (No. 39) for discontinuing the engagement, which Lord Nelson said to the officer who communicated it to him, he was sure proceeded from some mistake. When it was mentioned to Admiral Graves, he asked if it was repeated by Lord Nelson ; and on being answered in the negative, he said, ' Then we have nothing to do with it.'

Lord St. Vincent then added, ' For these and other causes,' probably alluding to the Armistice, ' we have recalled Sir Hyde, and Lord Nelson is to remain with the command. . . '

Immediately upon landing in England Stewart had heard the news of the death of the Emperor Paul, of which the Fleet was in ignorance when he

left it. This event, with the accompanying news of the complete reversal in Russian policy, had apparently been communicated to the Court of Denmark during the armistice discussions; in which case it would appear to have been the main cause of the change in the Danish attitude. The circumstances led to some little speculation in the Press, and two extracts from *The Times* of 29th April 1801 are not without interest.

Hamburgh, 17 April 1801. . . . The death of Paul the First changes everything. Lord Nelson heard it on the 10th, after the conclusion of the Armistice, and exclaimed 'Good God! why did I not know that event eight days sooner?'

. . . An article from Copenhagen, copied into the Paris Journals, states 'that during the time that Nelson was negotiating with General Walterstorff, the Prince Royal was informed by courier from Hamburgh of the death of Paul I. This intelligence, so unexpected and so important at the present crisis, was spread with rapidity through the city, notwithstanding the efforts of the Prince Royal and his friends to suppress it. It is certain, however, that Nelson re-embarked without a knowledge of this event, and there is every reason to hope that the English squadron would quit its station before the intelligence reached it.'

* * * * *

The news of the death of the Emperor Paul and the reversal of Russian policy reached London on 13th April; it was brought by a Courier who was charged with dispatches for Count Woronzow, directing him to remain at his post. Woronzow had left town and was at Southampton, about to leave the country; indeed, in anticipation of his having already left, the dispatches had been addressed to his Chaplain in London. Accompanying them was a letter from the Czar Alexander

to our King, expressing concern at the misunderstanding which had arisen between Russia and England, and his wish to restore peace between the two Countries.

News from Russia over the winter months had been very scanty, and the communication came as a complete surprise. Following hard upon it came the news of the success at Copenhagen. The Country had been delivered from a perilous position, from which it had come out with honour.

The late Czar had been the driving power behind the Armed Neutrality; his enthusiasm and energy cannot be denied. It seems certain, however, that in approaching France he could not fail to raise bitter enemies. The Russian Mission arrived in Paris on 6th March 1801, and Kalitscheff, amongst other instructions, was directed to persuade Bonaparte to take the title of King himself, and to make it hereditary in his family as the only means of changing the revolutionary principles which had armed all Europe against France.

A year before, upon the occasion of the return of Bonaparte from Egypt and the overthrow of the Directory, Louis XVIII had himself approached Bonaparte as to the restoration of monarchy. Bonaparte's reply, after Marengo, had been: 'Your return is not a thing to be wished for; it could only be made over a hundred thousand corpses.' Now the Czar threw over Louis XVIII, banishing him and his niece from Russian territories. It was impossible that Paul should carry with him the body of Russian opinion. The whole course of the French Revolution had been revolting to Russian ideals; and the proposals now for a close alliance with murderers, to elevate the arch-robber to royal

eminence, must have alienated most, if not the whole, of the Russian aristocracy.

Seventeen days after the arrival of the Russian Mission in Paris, Paul was murdered and his policy reversed. The effect on the Armed Neutrality was immediate. Its effect on the Danish negotiations we have seen ; and the orders sequestering British property at Hamburgh, in Danish occupation, were withdrawn. In Holland, the Swedish Admiral, Cronstadt, had been on a Mission, the immediate results of which had been the rapid equipment of the Dutch fleet ; as a consequence, Dickson, with the North Sea Fleet, had cruised off Goree. Their activities now died down and conditions returned to the normal again. On 29th April the Lord Mayor of London was able to announce, on official authority, that the Courts of Berlin and Copenhagen had determined to reopen the rivers of the north of Germany and that free navigation was now permitted.

Meanwhile the Baltic Fleet had left Copenhagen.

The Armistice had been signed on the evening of the 9th April, and next day, it would appear, the news of the Czar's death was known to the Fleet. Certainly it was known on the 11th, when Nelson wrote: 'The death of Paul may prevent the shedding of more human blood in the north. . . . We have reports that the Swedish fleet is above the Shallows, distant five or six leagues. All our fellows are longing to be at them, and so do I. . . .' There was a chance, in fact, of catching the Swedish fleet before the news of the changed conditions could reach them. Parker accordingly sailed from Copenhagen on the 13th, leaving Nelson to follow on. Writing to the

Admiralty on 25th April, from Kiøge Bay, he reports:

. . . It was my intention to have waited for the *St. George* in Kiøge Bay, but on the 15th the *Amazon* and *Blanche*, which had been previously dispatched off *Karlskrona*, returned with the signal of the Swedish squadron being at sea. I immediately communicated this to Vice Admiral Lord Nelson with an offer for him to shift his flag to the *Elephant*, which His Lordship did; but from light winds to the eastward, it was not till the 19th we reached *Karlskrona*, where we had the mortification to find the Swedish fleet at anchor within the harbour, consisting of 7 two-deck ships, 3 frigates and a brig.

Having returned to my rendezvous off the Island of *Bornholm*, on the 21st I was joined by the *St. George* and the ships and vessels left with her, and should have proceeded immediately up the Baltic to *Revel*, but did not think myself justified in so doing, as the Swedish squadron could, by mooring themselves on the upper part of the shallow water of the *Grounds*, have prevented Rear Admiral *Totty* and the reinforcement from joining me.

I therefore resolved to maintain my position—off the north end of *Bornholm*; by which I commanded both passages of the *Sound* and *Belt*, and ensured the junction of Rear Admiral *Totty*.

On the 22nd instant, I was joined by a Danish Cutter, with *Dispatches* from the Russian Envoy at the Court of *Copenhagen* . . . and on mature consideration on the subject they contain, thought it my duty . . . to return to this anchorage with His Majesty's Fleet, in order to receive Their Lordships' further Instructions.

In consequence of His Imperial Majesty's Notification, have given orders to prevent further hostilities on our part between *Russia*, *Sweden* and *Denmark* within the *Categat* and *Baltic*.

This morning I received *Dispatches* from Lord *Carysfort* and Sir *James Crauford*; both mark strongly

the appearance of an amicable adjustment with the Northern Powers, and recommend the suspension of further hostilities. I therefore trust, in full confidence, of Their Lordships' approval of the measures I have adopted for that important object.

However, Parker's station in Kioge Bay did not meet with the approval of the First Lord, and upon receipt of this letter the note to Lord Hawkesbury, dated 4th May, was written, requesting a Cabinet Meeting to approve other instructions for the disposition of the Baltic Fleet.

* * * * *

The letter from the Czar to His Majesty having paved the way for the resumption of diplomatic relations, it was decided that Lord St. Helens, who had been Whitworth's predecessor at the Russian Court, should proceed as Ambassador to St. Petersburg. He sailed from Yarmouth in H.M.S. *Latona* (Captain Frank Sotheron) on the 10th May; was at Copenhagen on the 15th, remaining there two days; on the 20th he picked up the Baltic Fleet and had a three hours' conversation with Nelson; and on the 29th he arrived at St. Petersburg, after a very tedious passage. Duroc, Napoleon's aide-de-camp, had preceded him, arriving on the night of the 24th; and both officers reported favourably on their reception by the new Czar. Negotiations followed, and on 11th July 1801 dispatches were received by the Dispatch cutter (Captain Blake), containing a Convention signed on 17th June, whereby all differences between the two countries had been amicably adjusted. Before the end of July the Courts of Sweden and Denmark had declared their adherence to the Convention, and the war in the North was over.

* * * * *

The actual fighting, for the Baltic Fleet, terminated at Copenhagen; but at the time it could be by no means assumed that affairs would be amicably adjusted, and the need for a Commander-in-Chief possessed of initiative and vigilance was as necessary to the Government as ever. Nelson's methods of negotiation might not be 'diplomatic,' but at any rate they were to the point; and one can imagine Addington being rather amused, as well as pleased, by his comments on Bernstoff's plea of ill-health: 'I sent him a message to leave off his Ministerial duplicity, and to recollect he had now British Admirals to deal with. . . .'

The command of the Fleet had therefore been entrusted to Nelson, and Parker directed to return to England. The orders of recall had been sent in charge of Stewart, and in his Journal for the 5th May, Sir Hyde Parker notes:

A.M. At 1, the Hon. Lieut.-Col. Stewart came on board with dispatches from England, by whom I received the King's and Their Lordships' approval of the Armistice with the Danes; but what was my astonishment and surprise at reading the next paragraph of the letter, which was an order to resign the command of the fleet to Lord Nelson, and shift my flag on board a frigate or a two-decker, and return to Yarmouth Roads. At 9, sent Captain Otway on board the St. George to communicate these orders to the Vice Admiral (who was to have sailed this day in the *Blanche* for England, with my leave, for the recovery of his health). At noon, waited on His Lordship, and delivered up all my public and secret instructions, unexecuted orders, etc. Ordered the squadron to put themselves under His Lordship's command, and follow his orders for their further proceedings. . . . Ordered the Vice Admiral to take them under his command.

P.M. . . . At 3, went on board the *Blanche*, when my flag was immediately hoisted, and struck on board the *London*. . . .

At half-past four the *Blanche* weighed and sailed for home—Parker 'very low,' writes Nelson to Davison.

Immediately upon his arrival at Yarmouth, on 13th May 1801, Parker addressed his letter to the Admiralty, protesting against the manner of his recall :

I am to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 21st ultimo with the copy of one from Lord Hobart signifying His Majesty's approbation of the Armistice which I had entered into with the Danish Government—which afforded me particular satisfaction by His Majesty's approval of my conduct.

At the same time I cannot forbear marking my astonishment at the Paragraph of your letter of the same date, directing me to shift my Flag to a frigate or disabled ship, and that Vice Admiral Lord Nelson was to succeed me in the command of the fleet. Here, Sir, with great submission to Their Lordships and in justice to my own wounded feelings at the indignant manner in which I am treated, I call upon Their Lordships and request them to point out any part of my Letters that can dictate the reason assigned for this treatment. After the marked honours bestowed upon me by His Majesty, the two Houses of Parliament, and Their Lordships' own approbation of my conduct on the 2nd April, which are dated the 17th of that month ; and on the 21st, only four days afterwards, recalled in consequence ' of the difficulties I am supposed to entertain of carrying into execution Their Lordships' further Instructions.'

I here again repeat that I call upon Their Lordships to point out any one paragraph of my letters that can warrant the inference drawn ; nor can I suppose when Their Lordships maturely consider the whole of my

conduct from the date of my letter of the 9th of April by the Hon. Lieut.-Col. Stewart to the 5th instant, the day I received your letter by the same Messenger, that any part thereof mark any delay or hesitation on my part in putting Their Lordships' Instructions into execution, consistent with the information I was in possession of, on which I acted; and which conduct, I have the satisfaction to find conformable to Their Lordships' Instructions of the 17th April. . . .

The *London Gazette* of 19th May 1801 announced to the public the honours for the Copenhagen action—to Nelson a Viscountcy; to Graves a K.C.B.; Parker was passed over. As will be gathered from St. Vincent's Note, Sir Hyde attended at the Admiralty on 20th May. Overnight, however, the question had been raised in the House of Commons, and the following day a discussion took place from which strangers were excluded. Before the House had been cleared, Tierney had already made some remarks to which Addington had replied, and these are reported in *The Times* of 21st May 1801. Tierney commented on the fact that the same vessel which had carried out the Thanks of the House to Parker, had also carried out to him 'His Majesty's Order to retire from the Service'; and Addington referred, in reply, to 'circumstances which may have come to the knowledge of Ministers.'

Accordingly, Sir Hyde Parker is reported to have demanded an inquiry into his conduct (*The Times*, 22nd May 1801); but, notes *The Times* of 30th May, 'the proposed Inquiry relative to the late proceedings in the Baltic must wait till the return of Lord Nelson from that station.'

It appeared not unlikely that Sir Hyde's honours were merely deferred until the King's

Birthday announcements; and on the 4th of June at His Majesty's Court, Parker, St. Vincent, Troubridge, and Stephens were amongst those present. Not only, however, was his name not included in the list of new Peers, but the Press was informed of a definite decision not to create him one. Accordingly, the arrival of Nelson from the Baltic was awaited with interest, his relief on account of ill-health having been publicly announced.

Nelson's early views are expressed in a letter of the 15th April to his brother Maurice, at the Navy Office. ' . . . Lord St. Vincent will either take this late business up with a very high hand, or he will depress it; but how they will manage about Sir Hyde, I cannot guess. I am afraid much will be said about him in the public papers: but not a word shall be drawn from me, for God knows they may make him Lord Copenhagen if they please, it will not offend me. . . . '

Writing later to Davison, who had suggested on 22nd April that 'as Sir Hyde is battling for a peerage, in God's name let him have it, and return quietly home, leaving you in command,' . . . Nelson wrote on 15th June:

They are not Sir Hyde Parker's real friends who wish for an inquiry. His friends in the Fleet wish everything of this Fleet to be forgot, for we all respect and love Sir Hyde; but the dearer his friends, the more uneasy they have been at his *idleness*, for that is the truth—no criminality. I believe Sir H. P. to be as good a subject as His Majesty has.

Nelson reached Yarmouth on 29th June, and not improbably communicated similar sentiments to the Admiralty. *The Times*, 2nd July 1801, announced:

Admiral Sir Hyde Parker lately applied to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty requesting a Court Martial to be held on him, to investigate his conduct, from the time of the battle of Copenhagen until he resigned the command of His Majesty's fleet in the Baltic. Their Lordships refused to accede to Sir Hyde's solicitation.

And, on the day of this public announcement, Nelson, it appears, 'attended at the Admiralty and afterwards paid a visit to Sir Hyde Parker.'

* * * * *

The state of Nelson's health having necessitated his relief, both St. Vincent and Nelson independently appear to have nominated Montagu to succeed to the command: Nelson wrote on 22nd May to St. Vincent, 'You have often spoke of that worthy officer Admiral George Montagu: I own, I long from his character to give up this Fleet to him, or some other good man.' Before the receipt of this letter, however, St. Vincent had proposed his name to the King on 30th May.

The withdrawal of Montagu's name, the nomination of Sir Henry Harvey, and the ultimate appointment of Pole are explained in the letters quoted. On 3rd June orders were issued to Pole to repair forthwith to Yarmouth, hoist his flag in H.M.S. Eolus, and proceed in her to take over from Nelson. On the 7th he sailed for Kioge Bay, where the transfer of command took place, and on 29th June Nelson landed at Yarmouth.

The necessity for maintaining a fleet in the Baltic did not long remain, and on 7th July Sir Thomas Graves sailed for Yarmouth from Kioge Bay, detaching six of his seventy-four gun ships,

under Captain Charles Tyler, north about, to report at Cork and join the Channel Fleet. On 20th Pole himself followed, and on 9th August arrived at Spithead in company with the remainder of the Baltic Squadron.

* * * * *

Before passing on, it may be noted that the action of the Swedes in not opposing the passage of the Baltic Fleet through the Sound aroused no little comment and was by no means understood. As Stewart says, in his Narrative:

It had been our intention to have kept in mid-channel, the forbearance of the Swedes not having been counted upon . . . Not a shot, however, was fired, nor any batteries apparent, and our Fleet inclined accordingly to that side, so as completely to avoid the Danish shot, which fell in showers, but at least a cable's length from our ships. The Danish batteries . . . continued in one uninterrupted blaze during the passage of the Fleet, to the no small amusement of our crews, none of whom received injury. . . .

In consequence of the adverse comments which appeared in the Press of Lower Germany, the Swedish Government issued a *communiqué* explaining the reasons for their conduct, and this, printed in *The Times*, 4th July 1801, reads as follows:

An official declaration has been published by the Cabinet of Stockholm, which gives the following reasons:—

1. That in the conferences at Petersburg between the Emperor and the King of Sweden, it was deemed impracticable for Sweden to establish, in the midst of winter, batteries on the point of Elsingén: that, in

consequence, it was agreed to fix the point of defence near Drogden in front of the road of Copenhagen.

2. That, during the Prince Royal's visit to the King of Sweden, it was said by the Prince that it was useless for Sweden to co-operate in the defence of the Sound.

3. That the King of Sweden did not insist, for fear it might be imagined that he wished to avail himself of the circumstance to assert his ancient and well-founded right to the half of the Sound duty.

II. LETTERS

Admiral Archibald Dickson

20 February, 1801.

On a full consideration of all the circumstances relative to the war likely to be carried on against the Northern Powers, it has appeared to be advantageous to the King's Service that all the Naval Force to be employed in the North Sea and in the Baltic should be placed in the hands of the same officer. I think it proper to give you the most early notice of this determination, and to apprise you that orders will be transmitted to you by to-morrow's post to put yourself and the ships with you under the command of Admiral Sir Hyde Parker.

It is unnecessary for me to enter into any explanation of the various considerations which have led to this arrangement, as I am persuaded from your knowledge of the Service you will at once see the propriety of it, and I rely with full confidence that you will heartily co-operate with Sir Hyde in the execution of the very important service entrusted to his care.

Lieut.-General Simcoe¹

22 February, 1801.

I am very much ashamed not to have thanked you for the important communication you have been so obliging to make, of the state of Cronenberg and Copenhagen, when besieged by the King of Sweden. I expect the book up every hour and you may rely on my care of it.

Dickson

24 February, 1801.

You may be assured that nothing but a conviction of the expediency of the measure could have induced me to dispossess you of your command, and that I shall at all times be glad to have it in my power to promote your wishes, having reason to be satisfied, from all the reports which have been made to me, that during your command in the North Sea, you have carried on the service entrusted to your care in a manner advantageous to the Public, and to merit the full approbation of this Board.

Lord Nelson

1 March, 1801.

Many thanks to you for your letters, public and private, which are so satisfactory they have put the Cabinet perfectly at ease. God bless you, my dear Lord, and be assured no man loves and esteems you more than your very affectionate

ST. VINCENT.

¹ Simcoe had the Western Command. On 2nd February Nelson wrote to Addington of a conversation he had had with Simcoe at Plymouth, on the subject of Zealand and Copenhagen (*Nicolas*, iv. 282).

Nelson

2 March, 1801.

. . . Many thanks for the spur you have given to the movement of the ships at Spithead. . . .

Sir Hyde Parker

3 March, 1801.

I am happy to learn that you are safe arrived at Yarmouth, and I hope Captain Domett, with some of the ships from Spithead, will soon be with you. In the mean time, such artificers as you have in Admiral Dickson's Squadron may be employed in caulking the gun vessels. Mr. Nepean will take measures upon the subject of pilots and victualling the fireships, etc. . . .

Parker

5 March, 1801.

The bearer, Mr. English, was introduced to me by your brother, Sir H. Parker.¹ He was Superintendent of the Arsenal of Petersburg for eight years, and appears to be a very intelligent, well-mannered man. He is ready to go all lengths with you ; and if, after conversing with him, you are of opinion that he will be of use, order him to be received and well entertained by some good fellow of your Squadron.

That all honour and glory may attend you is the fervent wish of your steady friend.

¹ Sir Harry, elder brother of Sir Hyde. He had been for over thirty years a clerk at the Admiralty when, in 1783, his father disappeared at sea, having sailed from Rio to take up his appointment as Commander-in-Chief, East Indies. Sir Harry succeeded to the baronetcy, and was promoted Chief Clerk at the Admiralty and Secretary to the Board of Longitude. He retired in 1794.

Nelson

8 March, 1801.

Be assured that every public act of your life has been the subject of my admiration, which I should have sooner declared but that I was appal'd by the last sentence of your kind letter : for God's sake do not suffer yourself to be carried away by any sudden impulse.

Dickson

10 March, 1801.

If the service of the Monarch could have been dispensed with in the Baltic on the present emergency, I should have endeavoured to have kept her in the North Sea for the reception of your Flag, but you must have seen that, notwithstanding the great extent of our present naval force, we have been put to much difficulty in collecting a Fleet of sufficient strength to meet the United Force of the Northern Powers.

I shall have great pleasure in allotting the Blenheim to the reception of your Flag, and of making any arrangement in respect to your officers which may be agreeable to you, and as a proof of my disposition to meet your wishes, one of the first things I did, after taking my seat at this Board, was to direct that your Secretary should be removed to the Blenheim when she should become vacant.

The time of the departure of the Fleet to the Baltic, I trust, so nearly approaches, that it will be scarcely possible to exchange the officers of the Monarch, but if it can be done without inconvenience to the public service or delaying her, I shall have no objection to any arrangement that Sir Hyde Parker may be able to make for your accommodation; the few men that you may

wish to keep with you may for the present be lent from the Monarch to one of the ships remaining with you, and an equal number be lent to the former in their stead, but if that cannot now conveniently be managed, I will take care that means shall very shortly be found for bringing back your officers and men before the Blenheim can be ready for them.

Directions were sent to Sir Hyde Parker to give Mr. Harvey leave of absence to attend you.

Parker

10 March, 1801.

I have been favoured with your letter of yesterday, enclosing a letter you had received from Lieut.-Colonel Stewart, commanding officer of the troops ordered to serve with you on your intended expedition, relative to the proportions of provisions and prize money to which the troops may be entitled.

With respect to provisions, I certainly see no sort of objection to the victualling them while on board, at whole allowance, provided they assist in the duty of the ships in which they are embarked, in the manner the Lieut.-Colonel has stated, and I have given directions that you may be authorized to order their being so victualled. It is by no means material, in the decision of this question, whether they are borne as part of the complement of the ship, or as supernumeraries; the only point is, whether they are employed, while on board, in any necessary duties of the ship.

On the subject of prize money, for captures made afloat, it is perfectly clear, that troops, borne as supernumeraries on board the King's ships, are entitled to share only as foremast men,

whatever their rank in the service may be ; but should booty be taken on shore, the proportions to be given to the military must hereafter be decided by His Majesty, and will, I take it for granted, be proportions according to the relative ranks of the officers, belonging to the naval and military services, employed in acquiring it. There are so many precedents to refer to, that, I confess, I see no difficulty in arranging this latter point to the satisfaction of all parties.

Parker

11 March, 1801. $\frac{1}{2}$ past 2 o'clock P.M.

I have heard by a side wind that you have an intention of continuing at Yarmouth till Friday, on account of some trifling circumstances. I really know not what they are, nor did I give myself the trouble of inquiring into them, supposing it impossible, after what you have written in your letter to Mr. Nepean, that there could be the smallest foundation for this report. I have, however, upon a consideration of the effect your continuance at Yarmouth an hour after the wind would admit of your sailing would produce, sent down a messenger purposely to convey to you my opinion, as a private friend, that any delay in your sailing would do you irreparable injury. The force you have with you is certainly equal to the first object, and there are many, very many, important questions that must be determined entirely by the prompt and vigorous execution of your orders.

You will, I am sure, on considering this subject fairly, think that I could not give you a stronger proof of my friendship than by conveying this opinion to you in the way I have done.

. . . I understand that there are a few Swedes and Danes on board some of the ships with you ; if it could be managed, it would, I think, be desirable that they should not accompany you, and I shall feel gratified, provided that it can be done without interfering with your sailing, if you and Admiral Dickson could make some arrangements for exchanging them for men from the ships which are to be left with him, but on no account to delay your sailing for one moment.

Dickson

17 March, 1801.

. . . The dispatch which you have used in sending Sir Hyde Parker's stragglers on, has attracted the attention of the Board and the entire approbation of [me].

Parker

18 March, 1801.

Give me leave to introduce Dr. Baird to your acquaintance and good offices, which he is worthy of, or I should not have appointed him Physician to the Baltic Fleet. The services he performed in the Channel Fleet will be attested by the Rear-Admirals Totty and Graves, and all the Captains who served under my command.

The Right Hon. Henry Addington 27 March, 1801.

The Prince of Wales put the enclosed letter from Prince Adolphus into my hands after dinner yesterday, and made some very judicious observations on the policy of keeping his brother at Berlin, or in Westphalia, as long as possible, in which H.R.H. said the Hanoverian Minister concurred. He expressed a very anxious wish

that I should communicate this to His Majesty's Servants, and a hope that a Messenger would be sent off to-day, and I think mentioned one of his own by whom he would write to Prince Adolphus. With your permission I will wait upon you at 12 o'clock, or sooner if convenient, to talk this matter over: perhaps Lord Hawkesbury may be in the way to take a part in the discussion.

H.R.H. the Prince of Wales

2 o'clock P.M.
27 March, 1801.

Mr. Addington, the Duke of Portland, and Lord Hawkesbury concur with me in opinion that your Royal Highness's proposition to continue Prince Adolphus at Berlin, or in Westphalia, as long as possible, is fraught with wisdom and sound policy; and Lord Hawkesbury will send off a Messenger with a Dispatch to that effect the moment he is in possession of your commands to Prince Adolphus.

Parker

5 April, 1801.

Many thanks for your letter of the 23rd, by which I have the satisfaction of knowing that you are placed in the most happy and enviable situation: no negotiations to retard your operations and a scene of glory immortal before you. We are pushing forward six ships of the line, the hospital ship, ten gun brigs, and a fire vessel, which will proceed the first favourable wind, and others will follow as fast as they can be got ready. I have no doubt you consult Vice-Admiral Lord Nelson and Rear-Admiral Graves in the most confidential manner: they

are straightforward men, without any views except facing the enemy in every direction. . . . I never was so sanguine as to suppose the destruction of the ships in the Haven of Copenhagen could be achieved without loss on our part, but I see no difficulty which may not be readily surmounted with such men and means as are placed under your command.

Lord Mayor of London

15 April, 1801.

I have the satisfaction to acquaint your Lordship that a dispatch has been received from Sir Hyde Parker dated the 6th instant, giving an account of an attack having been made on the 2nd, under the command of Lord Nelson, on the enemy's ships composing the line of defence at Copenhagen, consisting of two-deck'd ships, frigates and floating batteries, and that after a severe conflict which lasted several hours the principal part of the line was silenced, and of the twenty-three vessels which composed it, eighteen were taken or destroyed, including in that number seven ships of the line.

The loss on our side has been 234 killed and 641 wounded; among the former are Captains Moss and Riou, and among the latter Captain Sir Thomas Thompson.

I have the pleasure to add that Sir Hyde was at anchor with the Fleet off Copenhagen when the officer left him on the 6th, and that none of his ships or vessels had been lost or dismantled.

Parker

17 April, 1801.

I congratulate you most heartily on the complete success of the bold design and daring

execution of the attack on the line of defence before Copenhagen, which has received the most marked approbation of His Majesty, of both Houses of Parliament, and of the whole Kingdom.

What a happiness it was that the impression, made by the relation of Mr. Vansittart, did not long operate upon your mind, for besides the hazard you would have run of losing some of your ships in the Belt, the delay might have been attended with the most disastrous consequences.

The ships of the line and frigates which composed your Squadron were so well commanded and appointed that I did not feel much concern about the gun and fire vessels, knowing that any deficiency in them would be readily supplied from the ships above mentioned, and in truth I had no better to give you : and the sailing of the Squadron must have been delayed to this hour, and even longer, had the Board judged it expedient that you should have waited for the new gun brigs, some of which are only just launched ; and I do assure you, that upon a deliberate review of the important objects of your mission, taking in the preparations made by the Danish Government to resist an attack, I am decidedly of opinion that everything depended on the early departure of the Squadron from Yarmouth. I certainly did lay my account to a vigorous defence, and that in the assault we should lose one, or more ships : in that I am happily disappointed. I have, however, greatly to lament the heavy loss in killed and wounded : yet, under all the circumstances, it is not greater than might have been expected . . . Rear-Admiral Totty¹ will proceed to join you the

¹ Totty, after the court-martial on the loss of H.M.S. *Invincible*, hoisted his flag at Sheerness in H.M.S. *Zealous*, 5th April 1801.

moment the ships of the line from Portsmouth and the Nore arrive at Yarmouth, with all the gun brigs and fire vessels which can be got ready.

Nelson

17 April, 1801.

You have greatly outstripped yourself, and all who have gone before you, in the late most glorious conflict. I will pay the utmost degree of attention in my power to all your wishes, in which I shall be well seconded by every Individual of this Board.

Lady Nelson

18 April, 1801.

I will forward Mr. Nelson's letter by the first opportunity ; unfortunately Captain Otway had been gone eighteen hours before I received it. May I request of your Ladyship to make my most respectful compliments to the revered Father of my gallant and noble Friend, and permit me to assure you that no man entertains a higher respect, esteem and regard for your Ladyship than, Madam, your most obedient humble servant.

Dickson

18 April, 1801.

. . . The accurate statement you have given of the Dutch ships assembled is very satisfactory. I think their ardour will be a little abated by the late glorious success at Copenhagen, your congratulations on which I am very thankful for.

Nothing could be more judicious than the respect and attention you showed to Prince Adolphus in sending the Shark sloop to the Nore with the baggage of H.R. Highness.

General Sir Charles Grey

20 April, 1801.

We are about to send an Ambassador to Petersburg, and the moment he appears Count Woronzoff will be reappointed here. . . .

Lord Mayor of London

20 April, 1801.

I have the honour to acquaint your Lordship that the Hon. Lieut.-Col. Stewart arrived this day with dispatches from Admiral Sir Hyde Parker, giving an account of an Armistice concluded with the Danish Government on the 9th inst., by which it is agreed that no act of hostility shall be committed by either party on the coast of the different islands and provinces of Denmark and Jutland for the space of fourteen weeks, and fourteen days' further notice to be given before hostilities are recommenced : the Court of Denmark agreeing to suspend, during that period, her co-operation under the Treaty of Armed Neutrality.

Nelson

21 April, 1801.

It is impossible for me to describe the satisfaction expressed by His Majesty, his Confidential Servants, and the whole body of the People, in the conduct of your Lordship, and the officers, seamen, marines and soldiers who served under your auspices on the 2nd instant ; and all are equally well disposed to give credit to your zeal as a Negotiator. You cannot have a stronger proof than in your appointment to succeed Admiral Sir Hyde Parker in the command of the Baltic Fleet, on the conduct of which the dearest interests of this Nation depend ; and although

the death of the late Emperor of Russia appears to have made a material change in the politics of the Court of Petersburg, it is absolutely necessary to be prepared for the sudden changes which too frequently happen in the political hemisphere.

I will seize the first opportunity to convey to the King the high estimation you hold our friend Colonel Stewart in : he is the bearer of this, and will, I am persuaded, be of great use to you, both in treating and fighting if there should be again occasion.

That the same divine Influence which has hitherto prospered all your Lordship's exertions in the cause of your Country may continue to hover over you is the fervent prayer of your truly affectionate
ST. VINCENT.

Nelson

25 April, 1801.

. . . I grieve for the loss of your worthy brother, Mr. Maurice¹ Nelson, in whose advance-

¹ Maurice Nelson held two clerkships, one in the Navy Office and the other in the Excise, until 1779, when he resigned the latter appointment. Apparently, he left the Navy Office about 1794, but was reinstated in 1796. He succeeded George Hartwell as First Clerk and Secretary to the Committee of Accounts (corresponding to the modern Accountant-General of the Navy); and acknowledging his sister's congratulations, 4th April 1801, upon his 'appointment to the principal seat in the Office,' he says: 'It is one of the things I have always been looking up to, and it has proved the more gratifying to me as there was not any interest made for it, but devolved upon me as a matter of right.'

On 22nd April George Rose had a breakfast appointment with Lord St. Vincent to discuss the possibility of Maurice's further advancement; but on 24th April he died suddenly of brain fever. The *Gentlemen's Magazine*, in an obituary notice, says 'he was about to be appointed a Commissioner

ment I was occupied when Sir Thomas Troubridge announced his death. . . .

Sir Edward Pellew

1 May, 1801.

Many thanks for your congratulations on the dawn of success in our Baltic operations, which I hope will terminate happily and without more bloodshed. . . .

Nelson

1 May, 1801.

I shall recommend a large price to be paid for the Holstein, and I hope the ships that were not engaged will give up all idea of claiming for the head money; but I cannot possibly propose the measure you have suggested, which your Lordship will, I am sure, consider a very dangerous one, because it must if resorted to on the late glorious occasion be productive of ruinous consequences to the Country, and I am clearly of opinion that the grant His Majesty was advised to make to the Army and Navy in Holland was very unwise, and I believe the persons who recommended it are now of this opinion. Every other attention that can with propriety be paid to the officers and men who rendered such important service to their Country on the 2nd April will be uniformly observed by [me].

Lord Hawkesbury

4 May, 1801.

It seems absolutely necessary that a new Instruction should be sent to the Commander-

to the Customs and Excise, till a vacancy should have happened at the Navy Board, to which he would then have been removed.'

in-Chief of the Baltic Fleet, for the position he has taken leaves the Swedes at liberty to form a junction with the Revel Fleet; and it will be convenient for Mr. Addington to meet the Cabinet at your Lordship's office at 3 o'clock, if you will have the goodness to direct notes to be written for that purpose.

General Sir Charles Grey

9 May, 1801.

Secret. . . . I have this moment heard that Count Bernstoff has signified his intention to come here to negotiate a Treaty of Friendship when he has an assurance of being kindly received, which was dispatched to him the instant his notification arrived.

[Admiral] Sir A. Mitchell

13 May, 1801.

I have not lost a moment in making inquiries from what source the heroes of the Helder¹ are to receive the substantial mark of H.M.'s approbation, for it is not admitted that the Army and Navy can set up any claim of right: the ships have been valued, and the amount of them will be paid out of Droits of Admiralty as they occur, and there is a prospect of £100,000 being produced soon; and I conclude when that sum is in the hands of the Receiver, an order will be given to him to pay it over to the Agents appointed for the distribution, who ought not in my judgment

¹ The Head and Gun Money for the Helder Point business is in a train of settlement. The first payment to the captors, being about £44,000, it is expected will be discharged in about 10 days; the remainder, about £150,000, will not be paid, it is supposed, for some time' (*The Times*, 12th January 1802).

to have a profit of five per cent. for so little work as they will have to perform, but that is a matter for the consideration of the parties concerned.

Duckworth

15 May, 1801.

The manner in which my friend General Trigge and you obtained possession of the Danish and Swedish islands¹ is amongst the most fortunate events, as we are in a good train of negotiation, with every prospect of a peaceful termination of the flame which the Confederacy of the Northern Powers had lighted up; and as it is probable the *status quo* will be resorted to, you will of course desist from treating the Danes and Swedes in your possession as prisoners of war, and on no account commission the Danish corvette.

Parker

19 May, 1801.

Conceiving that a very early hour² will not suit your convenience, I shall be glad to see you at the Admiralty between twelve and one o'clock to-morrow.

¹ Nelson mentions the effect in Denmark of the news of the surrender of the Islands. 'They hate us in Denmark for, as they say, our hard terms which Duckworth and General Trigge have imposed on their Islands' (to Sir Edward Berry, 11th June 1801). 'The Danes are very much irritated at the hard terms imposed upon their West India Islands—and so every one must think them. When we look at the terms granted by the French to our Islands last war, we ought to blush. I trust Government will not allow such an example against us . . . (to Davison, 11th June 1801).

² St. Vincent's hours of audience were from 5 to 7 A.M.

Nelson

19 May, 1801.

Every increase of glory and honour to you is an addition of delight to my mind, and no one derived greater satisfaction from the manner in which His Majesty has marked his Royal Approval of your late eminent services than [I].

Lord Hawkesbury

21 May, 1801.

. . . I shall think it advisable to send two additional ships of the line, with the victuallers, which are now in preparation for the supply of the Baltic Fleet. With the Danish islands and comptoirs in the East Indies and a number of valuable merchant ships in our possession, we have a pretty good pledge for the continuance of the Armistice until the 1st of August ; nevertheless I am not for trusting implicitly to the faith of a convention so loosely and improvidently made.

His Majesty the King

30 May, 1801.

Lord St. Vincent has the honour of informing Your Majesty that he has received from Lt.-Col. Hutchinson of the 45th Regt., who has been serving on board the Baltic Fleet, and arrived in town a few hours ago from Yarmouth (having taken his passage in the sloop which brought Vice-Admiral Lord Nelson's dispatches of the 17th inst. to Your Majesty this morning), a lamentable account of the state of his Lordship's health and spirits ; insomuch that Lord St. Vincent is very apprehensive, unless his Lordship is immediately relieved, his life will be in danger.

On a careful examination of the list of Flag

Officers, Lord St. Vincent finds extreme difficulty in pointing out to Your Majesty an officer in all respects fitted for such an important command, considering the present critical situation of affairs with the Northern Powers, and after weighing the objections which occur to different persons, the officer who appears to him as most likely to be employed therein with advantage to Your Majesty's Service is Admiral Geo. Montagu.

Lord St. Vincent is aware that from his having remained so long unemployed, objections may be started to his being at once placed in such a responsible situation, but notwithstanding the extent of the list of Flag Officers, there is not one to whom greater objections do not arise than to the officer he has presumed to name to Your Majesty.

If Your Majesty should approve the arrangement Lord St. Vincent has taken the liberty to suggest, it is his intention to desire Admiral Montagu (who is now in Sussex) to come to town, and, should no unforeseen objection arise, to offer the command to him, leaving Rear-Admirals Graves and Totty in their present stations.

(*Add. MSS. 31158, 161.*)

From His Majesty the King Kew, 30 May, 1801.

The King has heard Admiral George Montagu well spoken of and his remaining unemployed lamented. He therefore highly approves the Earl of St. Vincent's proposal of sending for him and calling for his taking the command of the Fleet in the Baltic on the unfortunate failure of Viscount Nelson's health. The King thinks this arrangement so necessary, and its being speedily effected not less so, that He trusts the

Earl of St. Vincent will, when he has seen Admiral Montagu, report by letter the issue of the interview.

(Add. MSS. 31158, 161.)

Admiral Geo. Montagu

30 May, 1801.

Secret. An arrangement is likely to take place which may give me an opportunity of placing you in a high and important command, which I have long and ardently wished to see you invested with, and I am very desirous to see you here as soon as you can conveniently come. I also hope that you will be able to proceed on the service in contemplation with the shortest possible delay.

Lord Chatham

31 May, 1801.

Lord St. Vincent presents his compliments to Lord Chatham and begs leave to assure his Lordship that, until he saw Mr. Addington yesterday, he was totally ignorant of any the smallest objection to the employment of Admiral George Montagu, having received no other information of his conduct while under the command of Lord Howe except the relation of his manœuvres when in presence of the French fleet after the action of the 1st June from several of the captains who served under his orders, and from their report he formed a favourable opinion of his ability, for he never served with him; but the instant he was apprised of Lord Chatham's feelings, he cancelled the letter which had been previously written, for nothing would give him so much pain as to bring forward any officer of whom his Lordship did not entertain a good opinion.

Addington

31 May, 1801.

Upon conversing with Sir T. Troubridge and Captain Markham, who have a more perfect knowledge of what Sir Henry Harvey is capable of than I possess, I fear he will fail in decision if any very critical service should be called for, and upon the whole we are of opinion that Vice-Admiral Pole is the fittest person, and being on the spot may be dispatched sooner than any other officer, and we must make up to him the loss he may sustain by a temporary deprivation of his command at Newfoundland. Should this meet your approbation, I will send for him immediately and rely on you to make the necessary explanation to His Majesty.

Nelson

31 May, 1801.

I have to acknowledge your Lordship's letters of the 14th April, 5th, 7th, 8th, 16th and 17th instant, and to express the deepest concern at learning from Lieut.-Col. Hutchinson that your health has suffered in so material a degree as to require immediate relaxation from service and public business of all kinds.

To find a fit successor, your Lordship well knows, is no easy task, for I never saw the man in our Profession, excepting yourself and Troubridge, who possessed the magic art of infusing the same spirit into others which inspired his actions, exclusive of other talents and habits of business not common to naval characters; besides that your complaint demands prompt decision on our parts. We have therefore fixed on Vice-Admiral Pole, who, being prepared for another service, can sooner embark and with

less inconvenience than any other person, and will, I trust, arrive in time to relieve you from further anxiety.

Your Lordship's whole conduct, from your first appointment to this hour, is the subject of our constant admiration; it does not become me to make comparisons. All agree there is but one Nelson; that he may long continue the pride of his Country is the fervent wish of your Lordship's truly affectionate
ST. VINCENT.

Captain Domett

31 May, 1801.

I must do Sir Hyde Parker the justice to say that he wrote a very strong letter¹ of concern at not having named you in his public letter, on which alone the approbation of His Majesty and the Public were founded, according to the usage of Parliament and Office, from which there can be no departure. Much of the information contained in your obliging letter of the 15th

¹ In acknowledging the receipt of the Admiralty letter conveying the approbation of The King, 5 May, 1801, Parker adds:

‘. . . But on speaking on this subject, a most gross omission of mine, from inadvertence and hurry, in making up the Dispatches, occurred, and has given me unspeakable uneasiness, which has arisen from not mentioning the services of Captain Domett, my First Captain, which I confess, from his exertion and advice, I blush to think I could have omitted; and I trust Their Lordships will do me the justice to believe that no circumstance can have more seriously affected my feelings than that of having done what appears an injustice to an officer to whom I am so much indebted: but I trust, with confidence, Their Lordships will, in their great goodness, fall upon some method to conciliate the feelings of Captain Domett on not being particularly noticed in the Thanks of the two Houses of Parliament, and relieve me from the painful sensations I have, on this unpardonable omission. . . .’

had not reached me before, altho' many circumstances relative to the operations before Copenhagen (not reported) had come to our knowledge subsequently to the Vote of Thanks ; and I cannot express the regret I feel that a due representation of your merit and services was not made in such time and manner as to justify Government in restating them to the Public, although your character is too highly established to need any *éloge*.

Dickson

2 JUNE, 1801.

Many thanks for your letter of the 30th May, which gives us the satisfaction of knowing that the Blenheim answers your expectation, and the moment we are able to compose your Squadron of efficient ships of the line, the Board will have very great pleasure in doing it ; at present we are exceedingly pressed to provide for the numerous calls upon us.

Captain Goddard, an old and respectable Commander, was appointed to the Ranger the moment the death of Captain Little was reported from Yarmouth, and I really have so many imperious claims of the same kind upon my justice and feelings, that I shall not be able to bring your nephew forward as soon as I wish, both on account of the esteem I have for him and what is due to your brother and you.

Heartily wishing you health and all manner of prosperity.

Lord Mayor of London

3 JUNE, 1801.

I have the satisfaction to acquaint your Lordship that by a dispatch just received from

Viscount Nelson, Commander-in-Chief of the Baltic Fleet, dated 27th May, it appears that the embargo which had been laid on British ships in the ports of Russia has been taken off.

Hon. Lieut.-Colonel William Stewart 3 June, 1801.

I return you many thanks for your friendly attention in giving me such an interesting detail of your observations in passing through Hanover and Holstein, which does great credit to your judgment. I hope to take you by the hand soon.

Nelson 3 June, 1801.

I rejoice that your labours have finished so advantageously for your Country and honourably to yourself. As I hope soon to take you by the hand, I will not take up more of your time than to repeat how truly I am, my dear Lord, yours most affectionately.

Dickson 3 June, 1801.

I am very glad to learn that your Squadron escaped so well from the gale of Sunday, which we did not feel here. The attention you showed the Russian brig was admirably well judged, for I have the satisfaction to inform you that everything goes on well in the Northern Hemisphere.

Dickson 16 June, 1801.

I am very glad to learn that your Squadron has escaped with so little damage, which has not been the case in other quarters, although we were not sensible of anything like a gale ashore ; but I know what a N.W. wind is upon the coast

of Holland, even when it does not appear to blow hard in the offing. We shall keep Captain Campbell's plan in contemplation and act upon it when our means will permit.

Nelson

21 November, 1801.

I thank you for communicating the letter you have judged fit to write to the Lord Mayor. . . .

Nelson

21 November, 1801.

In further reply to Your Lordship's letter of yesterday, I must beg leave to assure you that I have given no encouragement to the other subject¹ therein mentioned, but on the contrary have explained to Your Lordship and to Mr. Addington the impropriety of such a measure being recommended to the King.

Nelson

23 November, 1801.

That you have perfectly mistaken all that passed between us in the conversation you allude to is most certain, and I cannot possibly depart from the opinion I gave Your Lordship in my last. At the same time I am extremely concerned that it should have had so material an effect upon your health, for the speedy re-establishment of which you have [my] fervent wishes. . . .

Captain Fyers, Royal Artillery

17 April, 1802.

I return you many thanks for the engraving of your drawing of the line of defence before

¹ Medals for Copenhagen.

Copenhagen, and for the honour of the dedication. I had great pleasure in stating to the Master General of the Ordnance your meritorious services in the Baltic, which His Lordship paid all the attention to your sanguine wishes could have taught you to expect. I therefore submit it to you, whether I can make the application you propose, without giving just cause of offence to His Lordship, injuring you in his good opinion, and defeating the object you have in view.

Mr. Addington

30 January, 1803.

I have this instant received the enclosed from Lord Nelson. I was cautious upon a former occasion in giving His Lordship encouragement upon the subject in question, because I foresaw that you would be exposed to claims from the captors of the Settlements in the East and West Indies, and indeed from all who took possession of any Danish property. In all probability you will soon have a visit from His Lordship, and I write this much in order to put you on your guard.

Nelson

30 January, 1803.

I have enclosed your letter to Mr. Addington, the source from whence all grants of money must come; I am ignorant whether any satisfaction has been made to the Prince of Orange for the Dutch ships of war, which have been entered on our naval register.



THE NORTH SEA
ADMIRAL ARCHIBALD DICKSON

AND

THE DOWNS
VICE-ADMIRAL LORD NELSON



I. INTRODUCTION

THE pacification of Europe, now fast approaching, was being achieved by two forces, diametrically opposed: one, the might of France—belligerent France, victorious France—dictating peace to the vanquished; the other, the might of Russia, intellectual Russia, binding the nations together in a league for the maintenance of International Peace. The discussions at Lunéville now brought these two forces into contact with one another, and their ability to work together in harmony for a common end was now to be proved.

Addressing the deputation that conveyed the congratulations of the Assembly to him at Lunéville; Bonaparte said:

If we possess continental peace, if the firmness and heroic courage of the French soldier have forced the enemy to desist from hostilities, the Maritime War is not yet terminated: and I hope that the union of France with the Great Powers of the North will at length compel England to adopt a system that will prove suitable to the interest of all the Powers of Europe.

The maritime system, however, was by no means the main concern of the First Consul. The overwhelming coalition against Great Britain opened up the prospect of the recovery of Malta and Egypt in the coming *débâcle*.

When, therefore, Kalitscheff with the Russian Mission arrived at Paris on 6th March 1801, nearly a month after the signature of the Peace of Lunéville, and he introduced into the discussions relative to the proposed treaty with France, the restitution of Egypt to The Porte (to which the Czar was pledged by treaty with Turkey) and the restoration of Malta to the Order of St. John, the difficulty of the two opposite systems co-operating became apparent. Kalitscheff, finding some difficulty in getting a satisfactory statement upon his proposals, insisted on a reply which the French persistently evaded giving. Unexpectedly, the news arrived of the death of the Czar. 'The event,' says Thiers, 'delivered England from a relentless enemy, and deprived the First Consul of a powerful ally, but one that latterly was becoming embarrassing, and almost as dangerous as he was serviceable. It is certain that the deceased Emperor, in the fulness of his arrogance, believing that the First Consul could no longer refuse him anything in return for his alliance, had required conditions with regard to Italy, Germany, and Egypt, which France could never have conceded, and these demands must have interposed great obstacles to the re-establishment of peace.'

An extract from Kalitscheff's Note, published in *The Times*, 18th July 1801, will show the tone that the discussions had assumed :

He must himself add, that the views which had been held out by the First Consul, the report which was circulated concerning his moderation, and his wishes to bring about a general peace, were the only reasons which made all Europe hope that the period of this general pacification was not far distant ; that there was a possibility to expect in future the fulfilment of the assurances given to the People that the system of Plunder

pursued by the Directory would no longer exist. This alone was the cause which induced His Imperial Majesty to send a Minister Plenipotentiary to Paris, by whose means it was hoped that an amicable intercourse might again take place between both nations. The undersigned flatters himself that the First Consul, upon being made acquainted with these things, will consider how much it concerns his own reputation to fulfil his promises, as well as the hopes that have been entertained of him: as it depends on him whether Europe, by a general Peace, shall enjoy tranquillity.

It is not surprising to learn from Thiers that Talleyrand informed Kalitscheff that his dispatch was very unbecoming and deficient in the respect due from one independent Power to another. Talleyrand added that the dispatch could not possibly be submitted to the First Consul, whose dignity would be justly offended, and advised Kalitscheff to forget it and write another one.

The news of the death of Paul and the reversal of Russian policy brought the work of the Russian Mission at Paris to a standstill. Duroc, aide-de-camp to Napoleon, was dispatched to St. Petersburg, where he arrived on 24th May, five days before Lord St. Helens from London, and both negotiations found the new Emperor intent on the restoration of universal peace. The Convention with England was signed on 17th June, and negotiations were begun for the peace between Russia and France, which was signed in the following October.

* * * * *

Over the whole of the year 1801 the various governments of Europe may be regarded as groping towards a way out from unceasing warfare. The pacification in the North represented a large

step towards peace, and one from which this country benefited enormously. In the subsequent negotiations with France we had a double hand to play; in our attitude regarding Egypt and Malta, our conduct was regulated by our agreements with Turkey and Russia respectively; in our attitude regarding colonial possessions either occupied or conquered during the war, the interests of our Portuguese allies had a considerable influence upon the course of the negotiations.

Although France effected a series of individual peace treaties with the belligerent nations, none the less a very close co-operation was maintained amongst themselves by the Allied diplomatists effecting these settlements.

The declaration of the Czar Alexander regarding Malta greatly eased matters. The Czar reverted to the original attitude of his father towards the Order of St. John, and contented himself with his father's original title of Protector of the Order, leaving it to a General Chapter of the various Langues to elect a new Grand Master. So far as France was concerned, the proposed rehabilitation of the Order in Malta would be a reversal of the terms of the surrender of the island to Bonaparte in 1798; but these terms had been already nullified at the subsequent surrender of the French garrison to the British. French interests were best to be served by working towards the restoration of the old-time French supremacy in the new revived Order of St. John. At the same time, the Czar's declaration disposed of a tricky point of difficulty with The Pope and the Catholic Court of Spain, in regard to the position of a schismatic Prince as head of an Order of the Roman Church.

There was now reason to hope that a solution might be found to the Maltese problem which would prove acceptable to all parties.

Egypt the Czar had bound himself, by treaty with Turkey, to insist upon the French evacuating : Alexander now appears to have resolved not to make that a point for difference between the two nations. The question was therefore left for settlement by France with Turkey and Great Britain.

In taking up this attitude, Russia was actually acting beneficially to us and our Turkish Allies. With the definition of Russia's intentions, the Turks were enabled to put their whole strength in the field, without fear of threat from the north : the surrender of the marooned Army of Egypt now became merely a matter of time—failing the relief promised from home or some unforeseeable disagreement between the Turko-British Allies.

Bonaparte's reputation, however, was deeply involved over Egypt, and his endeavours to save his eastern colony dominate the peace negotiations and provide the key to the consequent naval and military operations of the summer of 1801.

* * * * *

With the war clouds gathering in the North, the moment for making peace overtures to France was a very unfavourable one for the Addington Ministry. None the less, it had had to be faced. Our Austrian Allies had just concluded a disastrous peace ; and the necessity had come for stating the terms upon which, sooner or later, we would be prepared to discuss peace. Speaking therefore at the close of the Debate on the State of the Nation, 25th March 1801, Addington said :

. . . In respect to the question of Peace, that His Majesty's Ministers were disposed and determined to

take such steps as they conceived to be calculated for Peace. No form of Government in France should be an obstruction to negociation; and with this disposition on the part of this country, the success of the attempt would depend wholly on terms. He saw no reason to suppose that the enemy were averse to negociation. But it would be in vain to talk of their sincerity, if they demanded terms that were inconsistent with the honour and security of this Country. He disliked asperity of language towards any person, and was always concerned when it was used. He trusted a firm and temperate conduct, both towards France and Neutral Nations, would soon dispel the clouds that hung over this Country. . . .

This speech, the first made by the new Prime Minister, gave form to rumours that for some days had been in circulation. The first act of the new Ministry had been to cancel the orders for reprisals issued by Dundas on 21st January. Upon information that the French were pressing fishermen to man their Brest fleet, the orders not to make prisoners of fishermen had been revoked; whereupon the First Consul had ordered M. Otto, the French agent for prisoners of war in London, to return to France. These orders being now cancelled, Otto had remained in London, and the Press were given to understand that, on the Saturday previous to Addington's speech, Lord Hawkesbury had had a very long interview with Otto, 'the object of which was to represent the sentiments that prevailed among His Majesty's Ministers, and their desire to open a Negotiation for peace with the French Republic. M. Otto was requested to make known this disposition to his Government.'¹

Hawkesbury had informed Otto 'that His Britannic Majesty was ready to send to Paris,

¹ *The Times*, 28th March 1801.

or any other suitable place, a Minister fully authorised to give every explanation, as well as to negotiate a treaty between England and France.'

The Prime Minister had now made a public overture in the House of Commons. 'Respecting Peace, it is impossible for anyone to deny' (said *The Times*, 27th March 1801) 'that he expressed the only sentiments which an Englishman could desire to hear avowed by the Government; and the Country must recognize in them the first *real* overtures of Peace which have been made on either side during the present sanguinary war. Adverting to the forms of conciliation which he is determined to pursue, he declared his dislike to asperity and intemperance of language, and his concern at it whenever it was used. These words evidently made an impression upon the House, as they must do upon the Public, who will not see, without satisfaction, politeness and good manners restored in the intercourse of Statesmen'—a reference to the tone of Grenville's Note to France which had given grave offence amongst even his own party.

The Cabinet, therefore, were employed in formulating the terms to form a basis for discussion, when the news arrived from Russia, followed by that from Copenhagen; and finally, on Sunday, 3rd May, an *Extraordinary Gazette* announced the successful landing in Egypt. A repulse before Copenhagen, a defeat at Alexandria, had been possibilities not to be disregarded, and news had been awaited with some anxiety. Now, the effect of these events on the peace discussions was to reverse completely the relative position of the negotiators. The French, from being in a position to treat the British as supplicants, now had to

face a situation rapidly going against them. Egypt was everything to France at this moment, and instead of *talking* about Egypt, it had become necessary to *fight* for Egypt. The negotiations marked time accordingly. Despite his desire to make a public pronouncement before the end of the session, Addington was unable to do more than affirm, in the House on 8th July, the sincerity of his promises upon the subject of peace; 'Egypt,' comments *The Times*, 'continues an insurmountable obstacle to the arrangement of Preliminaries of Peace, and until the fate of that country shall have been decided there is at present little probability that the basis of Negotiation will be established.'

In these circumstances the First Consul turned to Portugal as providing a *quid pro quo* for Egypt and Malta, and brought pressure to bear on Spain to undertake an offensive against our Ally. To expedite the operations, Lucien Bonaparte, the French Ambassador at Madrid, was given General St. Cyr and Admiral Dumanoir as professional advisers.

Stating the position of the Negotiations at this moment, in a Note to Otto, for transmission to the First Consul, Lord Hawkesbury said, according to Thiers :

Egypt is at this moment invaded by our troops. Considerable reinforcements must soon reach them; then success is very probable. Nevertheless, the contest is not over. We admit it. Let us stop the effusion of blood; let us agree on both sides not to attempt the permanent occupation of Egypt, which we will both evacuate and restore to the Porte. . . . [As for Malta] as that Island was only to be evacuated by England in the event of the voluntary evacuation of Egypt by France, this abandonment being no longer a voluntary

concession on the part of France, but a compulsory act superinduced by the events of the war, there no longer existed any reason for ceding Malta as an equivalent. . . .

This was proposing to France the loss of both Malta and Egypt ; and in reply, the First Consul played his Portuguese card :

. . . Lisbon and Oporto will soon belong to us, if we feel disposed to appropriate them. A Treaty is negotiating at this moment at Badajoz, having for its object to spare the provinces of the most faithful ally of Great Britain. Portugal proposes to ransom her states, to exclude the English from all her ports, to pay besides a heavy contribution for the expences of the war, and Spain appears rather disposed to consent to this concession. But everything depends on the First Consul. He can assent to, or negative this treaty ; and he is about to reject it ; he is about to take possession of the chief provinces of Portugal, unless England consents to peace, and upon reasonable and moderate terms. . . .

This Note, freely paraphrased, forms the basis of Bonaparte's manifesto in the *Moniteur* of 9th June 1801.

But, whilst all this talk had been going on, the situation in Egypt had steadily worsened for France—and plainly something more than words was becoming necessary.

The First Consul perceived that it was necessary [says Thiers] to assume an energetic tone on this occasion, and show the feelings which existed at the bottom of his heart—that is to say, his determination to struggle hand and foot with England until he should bring her to moderate terms. . . . To these Diplomatic explanations, he added a public declaration made in the *Moniteur*, with a detailed account of the armament which he was preparing on the coast of Boulogne. . . .

This declaration, from the *Moniteur* of 21st June, will be found in *The Times* of 25th June 1801 :

... We shall not examine whether the Channel, which separates us, be so wide as to preclude the possibility of our passing it. We shall not say, that forced into the war by the determination of the English Ministry, there is not a Frenchman who, whatever his party or his opinion, would not court the honour of contributing to the repose of the world and the freedom of the seas. We shall not say all that the French people can do, if they feel that a last effort is necessary to their honour and their existence. . . .

... Will the English Ministers at length shew a disposition towards peace ?

* * * * *

It may be assumed that the employment of the disposable French Armies had been the subject of discussion between the French and Russian Staffs. The Czar, says 'The Cambridge Modern History,' ix. 47, wrote to the First Consul, on 27th January 1801, suggesting a French diversion on the coasts of England, 'a proposition to which the First Consul readily agreed.'

Police work and the enforcement of peace treaties afforded little scope for the employment of the considerable forces released by the peace with Austria. To employ them in Egypt, where they were urgently needed, was impracticable ; to turn them against Portugal was unacceptable to Spain ; on all fronts were now either neutrals or allies—except across the Channel, where lay the most inviting objective of all.

What might have happened, but for the unexpected death of the Czar, must be mere surmise ; certain it is that an ostentatious invasion threat, accompanied by an oratorical offensive, must have had its effect upon British

public opinion at a moment when the greater part of the Army was out of reach abroad. To the preparations of the French, visible from our own shores, would have been added the vast and unlocated strength of Russia and the Northern Powers. Now, the defection of Russia and her Allies had left France to carry out the plans alone. The First Consul, we are told, 'was overwhelmed with despair on receipt of the news. All his magnificent plans were ruthlessly shattered.'¹ The news from Egypt quickly following, Napoleon is quoted as saying 'There is nothing now left for us but a grand descent upon England.'²

Invasion preparations on both sides of the Channel had begun in earnest in May, though the first pronouncement of his intentions was only made by the First Consul in the *Moniteur* of 21st June. The French began to give considerable attention to experimental work with balloons and submarine boats, thereby providing the British Press with an opportunity for ridicule, of which it did not fail to avail itself.

Nevertheless, no attempt was made by the Government to minimise the importance of the French preparations. The force of gun-boats for the defence of the Channel Islands was increased and put under the command of Commodore the Prince de Bouillon ; and the Invasion Orders of 1797 relative to driving cattle inland, blocking main-roads, and otherwise impeding an enemy advance, were revived and circulated, as a measure of precaution, to the military along the coasts. The news from Paris was that Bonaparte had sent for Carnot, who had been responsible

¹ Fournier's *Napoleon I.*

² *The Times*, 2nd May 1801.

for the invasion projects of the Directory, and Moreau, who had arrived in Paris on 25th May; meanwhile great camps were being formed between Bruges and Ostend, and between Gravelines and Dunkirk. Boulogne began to be the rendezvous of gun-boats and other small craft, which were reported daily, creeping along the coast for that port.

On 21st June the *Moniteur* had contained the First Consul's threat of invasion. In the month that followed, his negotiations went from bad to worse. Spain disappointed him over Portugal; his attempts to get together a Mediterranean fleet to relieve Egypt were frustrated by Saumarez at Algeciras; and his bombastic proclamation in the *Moniteur* had failed to achieve its intended effect on the Peace Negotiations.

Its only effect was now to commit him, willy-nilly, to carrying out his threatened alternative—the invasion of England.

The First Consul [says Thiers] had not as yet decided upon a plan, as he did at a later period (in 1804), of a descent upon England: but he wanted to intimidate that nation by the notoriety and extent of his preparations; and, in short, he had made up his mind to complete these arrangements, and to carry his menaces into effect, if the rupture should ultimately take place. He entered into an elaborate exposition of his views in this respect in a Cabinet Council, at which the Consuls only were present. Having the fullest confidence in the devotion of his colleagues, Lebrun and Cambacères, he unveiled all his thoughts to them. He admitted to them that, with the armament actually collected at Boulogne, there was scarcely a sufficient force to attempt a descent on Great Britain, which was one of the most arduous operations in warfare; that his only object in making these preparations was to give England clearly to understand what was intended, i.e. a direct invasion,

upon the success of which he, General Bonaparte, would not hesitate to risk his life, his glory and his fortune ; that if he did not succeed in obtaining reasonable concessions from the British Cabinet, his resolution was taken : he would complete the flotilla Boulogne, to enable it to transport 100,000 men, and would embark himself in this flotilla, to encounter all the chances of a terrible but decisive blow.'

On the 21st July 1801 the Horse Guards issued the warning that invasion was imminent ; all leave was suspended. Amongst other appointments, the Marquess Cornwallis was appointed to the Eastern Command, 'as there were grounds to believe from every report,' wrote the Duke of York, 'that the French mean to invade this Country.' On the 22nd the Volunteers were reviewed in Hyde Park, over 4730 mustering on parade, before upwards of 30,000 spectators. On the 24th Admirals Lutwidge and Græme were informed that Nelson had been appointed by the Admiralty to supervise and control our naval defence forces.

Nelson, says 'The Cambridge Modern History,' ix. 53,

much against his own wishes, was placed in charge of the flotilla watching the French in the Channel. It was a service in which his life was unnecessarily risked, while his talents for grand strategy found in it no scope. Nor was his presence really required, for it does not appear that the Admiralty took the French preparations at all seriously. . . .

This, however, is hardly in accord with the letters of St. Vincent now printed ; and the Prime Minister himself expressed to his brother his anxiety at the complacent attitude of part of the Press, once the first effect of the warning

ST. VINCENT'S LETTERS

had worn off. The papers 'are certainly too tame on the subject of invasion. They underestimate the preparations that have been made by the enemy and ourselves, and have not yet taken the tone which, even under present circumstances, might be useful.' He himself reinforced the appeal of the First Lord of the Admiralty to Nelson to remain at his post, despite his ill-health, in view of the public sense of security which his presence inspired.

In addition to Boulogne, which attracted Nelson's attention, Flushing and the coasts of Holland within Dickson's command were also giving cause for watchfulness. On 6th August General Angereau and his Staff were reported as having inspected the Dutch fleet lying at Helvoetsluys, and holding a long conversation with Admiral De Winter, on his flagship. From Helvoetsluys, Angereau proceeded on a visit of inspection to Brill, Goree, and the Texel: meanwhile, reports were being received of the movements of large numbers of French and Batavian troops, in Flanders and Holland.

Preparations in this Country were pushed forward in the same spirit.

We learn from respectable authority [says *The Times*, 17th September 1801] that a plan of defence upon a more extensive scale, and more effectually calculated to answer every object than any which has yet been proposed or adopted, is nearly brought to a conclusion. . . . We understand that it is the intention of Government to arm all persons capable of service, from the age of 16 to 60, with pikes, in the districts along the coast most liable to any sudden descent of the enemy.

These plans were understood to have been submitted to the King at Weymouth, and on the

25th September circulated to the Lords-Lieutenant of Counties for report. Meanwhile, anything was to be expected from France on the 21st September, the date of the Grand Festival in celebration of the Founding of the Republic. The day passed off, however, without unusual incident, and it is apparent that pressure was being brought to terminate the negotiations one way or the other, when the unexpected announcement was made that the preliminaries had been signed at last. Hawkesbury and Otto signed on 1st October, and on Saturday, the 3rd, the news was announced in Paris. A week later, on 10th October, General Lauriston, Aide-de-Camp to Bonaparte, arrived here with the French Ratification, which had been signed in Paris on the 5th.

The Armistice spirit pervaded London equally with Paris. Crowds seized Lauriston's carriage, and drew it through St. James's Park to Downing Street.

'Lord St. Vincent happening to be at the Garden gate of the Admiralty, the mob gave the gallant Admiral three hearty cheers, who in return recommended them to take care of the strangers, and not to overturn the carriage.'¹ All London was illuminated, and the Admiralty, 'besides a range of lights along the curtain wall, had over the main-arch the Crown and Anchor, and Flambeaux on the pediment.'

On 12th October 1801 the Proclamation was signed ordering the cessation of hostilities.

¹ *The Times*, 12th October 1801.

II. LETTERS

6 May, 1801.

Duke of Portland

I will wait upon Your Grace, as soon as the business of the Board will permit, and explain the hazard which the coasts of the United Kingdoms will run, if a frigate is appointed to convey General Nugent to Jamaica on the eve of two Convoys being dispatched, one from Spithead and the other from Cork. The service in the Baltic has compelled us to take from the frigate force of Admirals Cornwallis and Dickson, and from the coast between Dunkirk and St. Maloes, so as to leave those services very bare indeed, and under the present menacing aspect of invasion, I really feel that any further diminution will be attended with the most serious consequences.

9 June, 1801.

Mr. Addington

Many thanks for the perusal of the enclosed, which certainly merits much and serious consideration.

[*Marginal Note*: Translation of a passage in a publication addressed to the Chief Consul on the subject of invading this Country, by I.N.] 'I.N.', or 'J.N.', was presumably an official translator (see Pel-
lew's 'Life of Sidmouth,' i. 384).

23 July, 1801.

Dickson

You will receive from Mr. Nepean a communication of a slight alteration, which it is

found necessary to make, in your Commission, which I am thoroughly persuaded your good sense and zeal for His Majesty's Service will reconcile you to ; for, be assured, nothing is farther from the intention of the Board than to occasion the most trifling disturbance to your mind.

Admiral Lutwidge

24 July, 1801.

The state of the enemy's preparations on different parts of the coast in the Channel, particularly opposite to you, beginning to wear a very serious appearance, and all the intelligence agreeing that a descent on some part of the coast is actually intended, it has naturally been matter of consideration what measures would be most advisable to be taken for our defence ; and after viewing the subject in every shape in which it could present itself, no plan appears to me to be so effectual, for frustrating the enemy's designs, as that of placing the whole of the force, applicable to that service, under the command of a Flag Officer, who will have no other duty to perform than that of attending to this important object. I am aware that the measure I have mentioned will materially interfere with your Command in the Downs, and I can assure you with great truth that I have so much respect both for your public and private character, that I should not have taken this or any other measure that might be in any respect unpleasant to you, if I had thought it could have been avoided, without detriment to the public service.

The officer I have fixed upon is Viscount Nelson, who will, I think, hoist his flag in one of the frigates, and proceed immediately to the

coast of France, to settle the necessary arrangements with the officers now employed there.

The command in the Downs will, of course, be left in your hands, with the superintendence of what is generally understood to be the Port Duty, while it may be requisite to continue Lord Nelson in this situation.

Vice-Admiral Græme

24 July, 1801.

The state of the enemy's preparations, on different parts of the coast from Havre to Ostend, beginning to wear a very serious appearance, and all the intelligence agreeing that a descent is actually intended, it has naturally been matter of consideration, what . . . object.

(*Verbatim* as to Lutwidge, above.)

Lord Viscount Nelson is appointed thereto, and I have thought it an attention due to you, from the respect I bear to your character, to apprise you of this arrangement, and that I feel satisfied your zeal for the public service will induce you readily to assist Lord Nelson by every means in your power to enable him to execute the arduous duty committed to his charge. You will receive an official notification of the vessels which have necessarily been taken from under your orders.

Rear-Admiral Rowley

24 July, 1801.

. . . The Fencibles will probably be employed afloat, and your presence in the Medway appears to us all of very great importance.

Dickson

25 July, 1801.

Many thanks for your letter dated the 24th. I have no doubt that Sir Thomas Graves, under

the instructions he has received from you, will perform the service required in your absence to your satisfaction.

We learn from Admiral Lutwidge that he has applied for the pilots you require, and I trust they will arrive in time.

Our intelligence touching the state of the camels¹ corresponds with yours, but that touching the number of French troops in Holland is very different, for we are told from various quarters that the French have not less than 40,000 men in the United Provinces: probably this is a little exaggerated. With many thanks for your obliging enquiries about my health. . . .

Nelson

29 July, 1801.

I was well aware that you would find everything to do when you got down: Troubridge and Markham are hard at work, making a disposition of the Fencibles, and they hope to obtain a good number of men from the Out-Pensioners of Greenwich Hospital. The Treasury have given sixteen revenue cutters, which are ordered to join you. The sand barges are ordered to Woolwich as they come out of the hands of the shipwrights, to receive their guns, etc., and will be directed to proceed to join your Lordship.

The dispositions you propose to make are very judicious and will give great confidence everywhere. We have received an account of the enemy having succeeded in stealing his gun

¹ CAMELS: Vessels which serve as floats on buoys, to assist large ones in getting out, which have not otherwise sufficient depth of water. The Dutch cannot bring out their large vessels without them (*The Times*, 9th July 1801). See also Falconer's *Marine Dictionary*.

and flat boats from Calais to Boulogne, not in any great number. The Pier of the latter is become a great object of bombardment, if it can be done with effect: of this your Lordship will be the best judge, when you are able to reconnoitre it. I return the calculation of means to act with the flat boats from the dockyards: the Lazaretto is a sort of sanctuary that should not be meddled with, excepting in the last necessity.

I hope you will sleep on board the Trinity Yacht when you are afloat, for you cannot be so comfortably situated in any other vessel, and your health is of so much importance at all times, more especially at this critical moment, when Your Lordship's example will do more than I can express.

I hope you will be able to get to the Downs soon. Admiral Lutwidge has replied to my letter, announcing Your Lordship's Appointment, in a most sensible and gentleman-like manner, as have Admirals Dickson and Græme, so that the path is smooth so far, and I trust you will not experience anything unpleasant, in the discharge of the important duty you have, so much like yourself, engaged in.

Nelson

31 July, 1801.

You are warranted in giving the fullest assurances to all the Sea Fencibles on the coast, that their services will not be required an hour longer than is necessary for the defence of their own homes, and that they will not be diverted from it, by being sent to any remote quarter.

I am glad you are going over in the Medusa, for Captain Gore has furnished Sir T. Troubridge

with some very good observations upon the subject of Boulogne, and will consequently be very useful to you. I am not acquainted with Captain Owen of the *Nemesis*, but he is very well spoken of. We are certainly very defective in local intelligence: the French newspapers inform us that Carnot has lately made the tour of the coast of Flanders, with a view to preparations for invasion, and, as he is the great adviser of all military measures of importance, I place some reliance upon the newspaper account, and will endeavour to obtain more precise information thereon, but at present I do not see my way in it. Captain Bedford is, I believe, a very capable man and worthy of your confidence; I sincerely hope your Lordship's health will not suffer by the exertions you are making, and I remain, with the truest regard and esteem, ever yours. . . .

Vice-Admiral Hon. George Berkeley

1 August, 1801.

Many thanks for your offers of service, and should there be any occasion for a flag officer to command the Fencibles on the coast of Sussex, you shall not be forgot. . . .

Nelson

3 August, 1801.

Many thanks for your letters of the 31st and 3rd, the latter from off Boulogne. I do not comprehend what the enemy mean by keeping so many of their flotilla without the Jetty Heads, unless it is to cover others expected from the westward; for as they have been collected from the eastern and western ports, it is not to

be supposed that they are to assemble in any other part of Picardy.

I heartily hope Captain Fyers will be able to do some execution amongst them, although our experience shows the uncertainty of sea bombardments.

Not only this Board, but the country at large derive so much confidence from your Lordship being at the head of our Home Defence, that apprehension seems to be dispelled from the public mind. Heartily hoping your health will not suffer from the exertions you are making, believe me. . . .

[P.S.] I enclose a *Gazette* of the glorious achievement of Sir James Saumarez and the squadron under his orders.

Lieut.-General Simcoe

4 August, 1801.

I return you many thanks for confiding to me the very able paper which you drew up, on the last threat of invasion, for the defence of the western coast, and I wish most heartily we possessed the means of giving you all the naval force which you deem necessary for the combination. I have not been able to give your plan all the attention it merits, from the various occupations I have to fulfil, but I have read enough to add, if possible, to the very high estimation I hold the Author in.

I am sorry to inform you that the Sea Fencibles in the eastern districts show very little disposition to make the return they were bound to do, for the great advantages they have received during the three last years, and we shall be under a necessity to take some very strong measures against them.

Nelson

5 August, 1801.

Many thanks to your Lordship for your letter of the 3rd, and I congratulate you most heartily upon the effect of your first essay. The humane attention Your Lordship has shown to the inhabitants of Boulogne does you the highest honour and cannot fail making the most favourable impression on the enemy. I anxiously hope Captain Fyers will not suffer much inconvenience from the wound he has received.

The plan you have formed for looking at the coast of the enemy between Boulogne and Flushing is well judged, and your presence on our own afterwards will inspire everybody with confidence.

Nelson

7 August, 1801.

Many thanks for your letters of the 5th and 6th. I cannot sufficiently express my admiration of all you have done, and have in contemplation. You are aware of the delicacy due to your Brother Commanders-in-Chief, and act with Your Lordship's wonted circumspection and liberality.

Admiral Dickson and his predecessor have turned their views towards Flushing, which is within the district of the North Sea Command, and you will, I am sure, accommodate yourself to the temper and feelings of the said Admiral in your inspection and plan of operations on the coast of Holland. I have always been of opinion that the real attempt of the enemy will be made from the Dutch and Flemish harbours, because of the great number of flat-bottomed vessels constantly employed in the inland navigation

of those countries, besides that there is always a large body of troops in them, a squadron to co-operate, and Angereau (who is considered as a fit man to conduct a desperate enterprise) is attached to the army in those quarters.

Your Lordship has made much more of the bombardment of Boulogne than from my experience in these operations I had formed any idea of, and much more in raising the spirit of the people here, to a degree not to be conceived.

I earnestly hope your health has not suffered. Your Address to the Sea Fencibles is well judged and must, I think, produce the best effects. The Board will take any part either in encouraging or coercing such parts of your force as may appear to you to require either.

We have great hope that the four ships of the line, which sailed from Cork on the 30th ult. to join Sir Jas. Saumarez, will have a good passage; and the moment Vice-Admiral Pole arrives, we shall make another detachment. Your effusions upon the subject of Sir James are natural to your honest heart, equally void of jealousy and suspicion: that it may long beat for the service of your Country and the happiness of your friends is the fervent wish of your truly affectionate . . .

Nelson

8 August, 1801.

I have to thank Your Lordship for the continuance of your correspondence touching the arrangement and disposition you have made of the Sea Fencibles, the whole of which will be left to your judgment, as it is fitting it should, from the unbounded confidence we repose in you. I am very sorry they do not turn out

in greater numbers : it is understood here that they entered into a written engagement, which is supposed to be in the hands of the Captains, and, we conclude, has been communicated to you.

The public mind is so very much tranquillised by your being at your post, it is extremely desirable that you should continue there. In this opinion, all His Majesty's Servants, with Sir Thomas Troubridge, agree : and happy as I should be to see you, let me entreat Your Lordship to persevere in the measures you are so advantageously employed in, and give up, at least for the present, your intention of returning to town, which would have the worst possible effect at this critical juncture. I will explain farther when we meet. . . . Heartily hoping you are recovered from the fatigue you have undergone, believe me to be . . .

Nelson

10 August, 1801.

Our advices from Paris say that the First Consul has declared himself Generalissimo of the Army of Invasion, and that we are to look to Flanders for the grand effort.

The dispositions you have made, and are making, appear to us all as the most judicious possible. I agree with Your Lordship entirely that the conduct of the Sea Fencibles has many precedents in higher life, and that disinterested public virtue is a rare plant ; but after being exempted from the Impress, and allowed the benefit of constant Protection and unmolested pursuit of their occupations, during the last four years, the Country has a fair claim to the condition of the obligation. . . . The delicacy you have

always shewn to senior officers is a sure presage of your avoiding by every means in your power to give umbrage to Admiral Dickson, who seems disposed to judge favourably of the intentions of us all. It is, in truth, the most difficult card we have to play. Pray take care of your health, than which nothing is of so much consequence to the Country at large—more particularly so to your affectionate. . . .

Nelson

11 August, 1801.

Having never seen the document under which the Sea Fencibles are enrolled, I probably have been in error upon the subject of it, and Your Lordship is taking the wisest measures possible to remedy any defects in the agreement.

The moment Lord Keith signifies his intention of retiring from his command, you shall be apprized of it: in the meanwhile we are about to strengthen the squadron before Cadiz, and Vice-Admiral Pole will sail with six ships of the line as soon as they can be got ready for that purpose, understanding that he must return to England the instant Lord Keith comes down the Mediterranean—this *entre nous*. Our negotiation is drawing near its close and must terminate one way or other in the course of a few days, and I need not add how very important it is that the enemy should know you are constantly opposed to him.

I am glad Mr. Spence is of so much use. It appears that your early knowledge of the embouchure of the Thames and Medway remains with you, for the manner in which you treat of it conveys greater information to us than any we have received from other quarters.

Nelson

12 August, 1801.

The river barges are delayed by the Ordnance, who are not so quick as our impatient spirit at this Board wishes them to be. The fireships will be placed under Your Lordship's orders, and I believe Flushing will be one of the few ports where any enterprize of the kind can be attempted with any reasonable prospect of success.

You are so rapid in your movements it is difficult to know where to write at Your Lordship. I am very happy to learn that Captain Parker continues to be of so much use: every person who relieves your fatigues has a just claim upon [me]. . . .

Nelson

14 August, 1801.

I am extremely concerned to learn by your letters of yesterday that the fatigue you have undergone has injured your health, so precious at all times, more particularly so at this crisis. Your mind is superior to the mischievous wit of the news writers, which is always directed against the great and good. Be assured no service whatever can be of greater importance than that Your Lordship is employed in, and, as we have every reason to believe it cannot be of long duration, I trust in God that you will be enabled to go through with it. Our intelligence received this day indicates that Ireland is the great object of descent, but that it will be accompanied by demonstrations from Boulogne and Dunkirk or Ostend, and they persevere in endeavours to get more boats from the western ports. There are no troops which can be spared

from hence, and there is not a disposable marine at quarters, so that there is nothing to add to our floating warfare, and anything Your Lordship plans with the means you have, will meet the entire approbation of His Majesty's Confidential Servants, and of this Board, and specific orders given to carry it into execution if you require them. I never saw any good arising from consultations, and have studiously avoided them throughout my sea life, and in addition there is every reason to wish your continuance on the coasts of France and England as your judgment may direct for the present.

We have had some difficulties about the barges, which I hope will be removed and that they will drop down the river to-morrow.

[P.S.] I have obeyed your orders in respect to the reports relative to the Sea Fencibles, and I fear the observations you make attach upon all the Public Offices, and there are writers in all our ports who communicate everything that passes at them.

Simcoe

15 August, 1801.

In returning your Paper, which I have read with great satisfaction, I cannot sufficiently express my admiration of your plan of defence, and I am very much flattered by that part of it which relates to the employment of our naval force, because I have advised the principle, and we are now acting upon it.

Nelson

17 August, 1801.

It is not given to us to command success :
Your Lordship and the gallant officers and men

under your orders most certainly deserved it, and I cannot sufficiently express my admiration of the zeal and persevering courage with which this gallant enterprise was followed up, lamenting most sincerely the loss sustained in it, more particularly the grievous wounds of Captain Parker and Mr. Langford.

The manner in which the enemy's flotilla was made fast to the ground and to each other could not have been foreseen, and instead of blame the highest praise is due to Your Lordship and all under your command who were actors in this glorious attempt.

The intelligence lately received, as Your Lordship will perceive when it reaches you, gives reason to believe that Dunkirk is the rendezvous of the Dutch and Flemish flotilla, and the principal embarkation will probably be made from thence. . . .

. . . Dr. Baird was ordered down to Deal soon after the receipt of your letter, and the Sick and Wounded Board directed to pay every attention to the brave fellows who have suffered.

Nelson

18 August, 1801.

It is totally out of the question your communicating to Admiral Dickson any plan of attack Your Lordship may form upon any part of the enemy's coast. All that can be expected by him is that degree of delicacy you are never unmindful of, to the ships of his Squadron you may happen to fall in with.

I am utterly unacquainted with the coast of Flanders and Holland, but when Your Lordship has taken a view of it and furnishes us with

your ideas, we shall be better able to form a judgment of the practicability of an attack. You will, I trust, never harbour a doubt of my giving every possible support to your operations in thought, word, and deed ; I think my conduct through life secures me from it.

With the list of the killed and wounded before me, I can readily judge of your feelings by my own. Enterprises of this nature cannot be conducted without loss : we have to lament that it has fallen upon such excellent characters.

I heartily hope that a little repose will restore Your Lordship's body and mind, for your health is of incalculable importance to your country and friends—to no one more than your truly affectionate—

Nelson

19 August, 1801.

Many thanks for the perusal of the enclosed : the success of the enemy in escaping the vigilance of Captain Russel does not by any means surprise me. I have during the late fogs expected to learn by every post that whatever junctions were intended would be made. . . . Captain Conn is a stout seaman, with a good judgment, and, I have no doubt, the very proper orders you left will be punctually carried into execution.

From what I recollect of Calais a bombardment would produce very little effect, and agreeing entirely with you that throwing shells fruitlessly is a very false maxim, the Telegraph was not made use of this morning. I rejoice that the fire vessels are arrived from Yarmouth, and most heartily wish success to that, or any other enterprise in contemplation.

Nelson

20 August, 1801.

. . . Long experience has taught me to know that everything will be attempted which gives a fair and reasonable expectation of success. I am sorry that any part of your flotilla fails at a pinch, the more so because the vessels in question are so much better found and navigated than any of the same build and rig employed in His Majesty's Service. They will, however, be useful in making demonstrations, etc.

That every possible success may attend you is the fervent wish of [myself].

George Rose, Esq.

21 August, 1801.

Many thanks for your confidential communication. The calls upon us for the defence of the eastern coast have been so great, we have not yet found means to furnish any addition to the floating defence of the Needles. The description you give of the state of Hurst Castle is lamentable, and the season of the year too far advanced to allow of any permanent work being taken in hand. Field defences might readily be thrown up by the troops cantoned in the neighbourhood of Lymington.

Nelson

26 August, 1801.

You have acted very wisely in giving up the meditated attack upon the naval force of the enemy at Flushing, and I am very doubtful of the success of any further enterprise (with fire ships) at Boulogne, conceiving that the numerous batteries erected to cover the enemy's

flotilla will make it extremely difficult to approach them without exposing our own to a loss beyond any advantage which can be derived from the attempt. I know Dungeness to be a very good anchorage for vessels of easy draught of water, and it is certainly a better position than the Downs for the objects Your Lordship has in view. Our intelligence from Holland and Hamburg states that the expedition preparing in Holland is destined for the north coast: Newcastle, Berwick and Leith are named as points of attack; and it is asserted that the squadrons from Cadiz and Rochfort are intended for Ireland.

Our Negotiation is drawing to a point, and will soon be determined, one way or the other; the moment it is, you shall have the result.

Nelson

3 September, 1801.

Your Lordship judges perfectly right to keep the active and efficient part of your force as much out of the Downs as is consistent with the preservation of the health of the men and keeping their water and provisions up. Several of the gun brigs are, I understand, both from their build and state of repair, unfit to keep the sea during the winter months; and it appears to me that they cannot be better stationed than at the entrance of the rivers and ports on the coasts of Essex, Kent and Sussex: some of the small harbours to the westward of Beachy are, I believe, without any floating defence, but they are in the Portsmouth District. Whatever disposition you think fit to make of these gun vessels will have the full approbation of the Board collectively and individually.

We have had the wind so far to the southward of west, that no apprehensions have been felt for the cruisers on the coast of Flanders and Holland. I hope their ground tackle is better than ours was in the Channel Fleet this time twelve months, for, with a good scope of cable, our ships have rode out many a hard gale, in the depth of winter, on the coast of French Flanders.

Nelson

5 September, 1801.

. . . I never thought it possible to prevent the enemy from conveying their flotilla along shore, even in milder weather. At the present moment, none of our cruisers can keep their coast on board, so as to prevent it. Should the weather set in moderate, when Boulogne Pier is filled with flat and gun boats, it would not be amiss to let fly a few shells at them; if Your Lordship should be of opinion that the experiment may be tried without exposing the bombs and protecting squadron to too much hazard. I rejoice that you are not afloat in this gale, for although I never was sea-sick, I have seen so much distress in those subject to it, that makes me feel most sensibly for Your Lordship.

Nelson

5 September, 1801.

Your Lordship's observations upon the gun brigs and other parts of the flotilla under your orders, I believe to be very just, and it will be certainly right to nurse them.

There undoubtedly is a combination amongst

the pilots not to keep the sea in the winter ; our frigates in the former war anchored in Graveline Pits, and rode out many a hard gale of wind. I doubt, however, whether the smaller vessels could endure the sea which the wind at N.W. occasions, and in course ought to obtain an offing on the appearance of blowing weather, which must always be left to the discretion of the commander. I have observed during the last eighteen months that it has been the practice of the enemy to put to sea on the cessation of a gale of wind, and that our cruisers have been very tardy in leaving port after being driven in by the stress of weather, by which much mischief has happened. Therefore all the ships and vessels obliged to take shelter in the Downs, Dungeness, or Margate Roads, should be always on the alert, at least such of them as are appointed to watch the enemy's motions on the coast of France.

Should Captain Calvert be near Your Lordship, it may not be amiss for you to have a little conversation with him upon the subject of South Foreland and Dungeness Lights. In the absence of Sir Robert Preston, he is the person we consult, and Captain Gore's letter will be referred to him. Many of our night signals being made with many guns, it is to be apprehended much injury to the Coasting Trade may be done by extinguishing those lights upon guns being heard in the offing.

The situation you are placed in, is a very important one, and does not expose Your Lordship to the elements in blowing weather. I therefore hope you will not relinquish it, at a moment when the services of every man are called for by the circumstances the Country is placed in,

so imperiously that upon reflection I persuade myself you will think as I and every friend you have with whom I am in habits of conversation does on this subject.

Sarcasms in Newspapers are a tribute every man who is placed in a high situation must submit to: it is evident that those I have read are levelled at the Administration of the Government, and intended to deprive the Country of your eminent services.

Nelson

Fulham, 9 September, 1801.

Having been confined by illness at this place, since Monday, I could not imagine what the postscript in Your Lordship's letter of the 6th alluded to, until Mr. Nepean called upon me last evening. You will learn from him of the escape of the miscreant who, I strongly suspect, is a person from whom I have lately received some anonymous papers of the most malignant tendency, with an endeavour to draw from me an approbation of their publication. If he is a man employed about any of the Newspaper printing offices, I think we shall lay hold of him, and Your Lordship may rely on every exertion being made to bring him to justice. . . . I am, as you know, well disposed towards Captain Conn, but if Your Lordship knew the incredible number of Commanders senior to him on the list, who importune me daily for employments, the removing him into an active sloop would not appear so easy a matter. I do assure you a just disposition of the Patronage is the most difficult thing I have to perform; and it is no less my duty than inclination to discharge it conscientiously.

Nelson

12 September, 1801.

. . . I hope Your Lordship has not suffered materially by the late change in the air, which has almost demolished [me].

Dickson

14 September, 1801.

I am glad the *Pluto* is not so much advanced as our intelligence conveyed. At the same time I have great satisfaction in assuring you that no member of this Board imputed the smallest degree of blame to any part of the Squadron under your orders, for her escape from Flushing, which we all know from experience cannot at all times be prevented. I heartily hope you enjoy good health, and have the honour to be, with great esteem and regard, etc.

Nelson

14 September, 1801.

Until Your Lordship has had a conference with Captain Campbell, we are not disposed to come to a final determination on the design against the port in question, and as we have observed more than common caution, I trust it will not be let out. The preparations being made under your direction, is the only mode we can employ to mask it. Happy should I be to place the whole of our offensive and defensive war under your auspices, but you are well aware of the difficulties on that head.

Nelson

21 September, 1801.

. . . Should the attempt in question take place it will necessarily be made under the

direction of Admiral Dickson. . . . The other subject of your letter is of too delicate a nature for me to reply to, for obvious reasons.

Nelson

22 September, 1801.

. . . I differ from Your Lordship *in toto* as to the importance of the command you fill, and I am of opinion it is not unworthy of an Admiral of the Fleet, was he in a state of health and activity to fill it. . . . God send us better times with peace in our borders and war in the enemy's country.

Nelson

29 September, 1801.

I had not the heart to write to you on receiving the account of Captain Parker's death, knowing full well how impossible it is to convey consolation upon such afflicting occasions, which time and reflection can only reconcile.

What a war of devastation this has been. That I may soon be able to greet you {^{on}_{with} an honourable close of it, is the fervent wish of [myself] . . .

General Smith

29 September, 1801.

. . . I have always been of opinion that a defensive war, to the degree of keeping all our force on this side, was very impolitic and incongenial to the feelings of the people at large, and I rejoice that the contrary principle meets your approbation. . . . When we next meet I will explain, and I hope satisfactorily, why no promotion has or can take place in consequence

of the attack on the enemy flotilla before Boulogne, in which so much gallantry was displayed by both officers and men.

Nelson

2 October, 1801.

I am happy to inform Your Lordship that the Preliminaries of Peace were signed last night, and I hope under the auspices of Marquis Cornwallis the Definitive Treaty will soon be negotiated. Pending which we must lay upon our arms; and the Country has received so many proofs of your zeal in its service, as leaves no doubt of your remaining at the head of the squadron under Your Lordship's orders until Peace is proclaimed.

Nelson

5 October, 1801.

I fear Your Lordship has not received my letter of the 2nd, which by mistake, I understand, was sent to Deal instead of Dungeness. You judge perfectly right that any attempt upon the enemy after the signature of Preliminaries would be an ill omen of the sincerity of our professions. I agree with you so entirely upon this subject that not one cruiser will be sent out by the Admiralty during the period to which hostilities are permitted, nor will the Board depart an iota from this principle. We expect to receive the Ratification of the Preliminaries every hour; and are now employed in preparing a plan of distributing our naval force, pending the negotiation of the Definitive Treaty.

I must appeal to every action of my life towards Your Lordship, since I have had the honour of your acquaintance, for the unequivocal

and substantial proofs of the affection, esteem and regard with which I am, yours most truly . . .

Dickson

7 October, 1801.

Many thanks for your obliging letter of congratulation. Everything is due from me to Sir Thomas Graves, but I really think he had better rub on in the Polyphemus for the short time he will probably serve in the North Sea.

Dickson

8 October, 1801.

I have the pleasure to acquaint you that the Board has given directions that the arrangement requested by Sir Thomas Graves may take place for his accommodation.

Dickson

12 October, 1801.

I return you many thanks for your letter of yesterday, and for your attention to Sir Thos. Graves's nephew, whose promotion had previously taken place here.

Nelson

15 October, 1801.

. . . Encompassed as I am by applications and presumptuous claims, I have nothing for it but to act upon the defensive, as Your Lordship will be compelled to do whenever you are placed in the situation I at present fill.

Nelson

20 October, 1801.

Many thanks for your kind hints about the block ships, which are approved by the Board

and will be acted upon: directions have been given to the Navy Board to dispose of all the gun vessels out of repair: the twenty last built are efficient and will be useful in Peace. . . . I heartily hope a little rest will soon set you up, but until the Definitive Treaty is signed, Your Lordship must continue in pay, although we may not have occasion to require your personal services at the head of the squadron under your orders. Remember me kindly to all those we mutually esteem within your reach.

[P.S.] Your Lordship acted with great judgment in releasing the French coaster.

Nelson

24 October, 1801.

Although I shall be very happy to see you, I beg you will not, out of ceremony, think of coming to town until your complaint is entirely removed, for which and every other blessing you have the fervent wishes of your very affectionate . . .

Nelson

16 November, 1801.

Nothing but ill-health would have kept me from the House of Lords¹ on Friday, and I do not feel the better for having attended at Lord Hawkesbury's office this morning. I rejoice, however, to learn that Your Lordship is able to go through all these scenes without suffering. . . .

¹ Nelson spoke in the debate on the Russian Treaty and Northern affairs in the House of Lords, on Friday, 13th November 1801.

Dickson

Rochetts, 24 January, 1802.

I return you many thanks for the obliging interest you take in the recovery of my health, which is improving by slow degrees. I agree with you that on the conduct of the officers alone depends the restoration of good order, discipline and subordination in the Navy; the times are unfavourable to it, nevertheless we must do our utmost, and not sacrifice the very vitals of the service to the miserable popularity of pleasing or indulging this or that officer.

Lutwidge

Rochetts, 13 April, 1802.

As in all probability the period approaches when you will be released from your services in the Downs, I beg leave to express the sense I feel of the zeal and judgment you have shown in the discharge of your duty on that important station, and to assure you of the esteem and regard with which I have the honour to be, etc., etc.

Dickson

25 April, 1802.

As I naturally conclude you had rather see your nephew, Captain A. Dickson, a Post Captain than the 1st Lieutenant of the *Blenheim* a Commander, I have arranged it so, having done the same by Sir Thos. Pasley, who has a nephew on the list of Commanders.

Dickson

26 April, 1802.

As I conclude you will prefer being set down in the vicinity of your residence, to carrying

your flag to the Nore, provisional orders will be given accordingly ; and I beg leave to express the sense I entertain of your zeal and attachment to the public service in so laudably persevering to the end in maintaining good order and discipline in the squadron under your command ; and with my very best wishes for a long enjoyment of health and happiness after the fatigues you have undergone, I have, etc., etc.

Dickson

3 July, 1802.

I have the satisfaction to acquaint you that the King has been graciously pleased to approve of your being created a Baronet, for the long enjoyment of which and of every other felicity you have the hearty wishes of, etc., etc.

THE MEDITERRANEAN

ADMIRAL LORD KEITH

REAR-ADMIRAL SIR RICHARD BICKERTON

REAR-ADMIRAL SIR JOHN BORLASE WARREN

REAR-ADMIRAL SIR JAMES SAUMAREZ



I. INTRODUCTION

(a) EGYPT

THE marooning of the French Army in Egypt dated from the Battle of the Nile ; but two years were to pass before British military assistance could be spared for our Turkish Allies. Meanwhile Sir Sidney Smith had been sent out from home, in October 1798, to co-operate with the Russo-Turkish Squadron in the Levant in conjunction with his brother, Spencer Smith, our Minister at Constantinople. Hood had been in charge off Alexandria ; and Nelson would himself have been there, but that the approaching campaign in Italy required his presence at Naples, to support and protect the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. Of the Egyptian intruders, ' I have little doubt,' he wrote to Wyndham, ' but that Army will be destroyed by plague, pestilence, and famine, and battle and murder.'

The critical military outlook of France in 1799 and the urgent need for trained reinforcements necessitated the return of the Army of Egypt ; and, in May, Admiral Bruix and the Atlantic fleet arrived at Toulon from Brest to effect this end. The Directory in its Orders, dated 26th May 1799, stated that the serious and almost alarming turn that the war had taken made it necessary for the Republic to concentrate its

forces ; Bruix was therefore to make for Egypt, and to bring away the whole French Army, unless the Commander-in-Chief should judge it possible to leave a part of his force in Egypt, in security ; Bonaparte himself was summoned to return to Europe, to take the chief command of the forces of the Republic. Bruix was unable, however, to carry out his instructions : putting to sea on 27th May, he encountered Keith with a combined Channel and Mediterranean squadron. He intended apparently to return to Toulon with the Spanish fleet from Carthagenas ; instead, however, he and his Allies passed the Straits, and the whole force made for Brest.

The disaster at Novi in August 1799 made the return of the Army of Egypt an urgent matter. The attempt to bring them back having failed, recourse was had to negotiation ; and Reinhard was directed, on 18th September, to write letters of recall to Bonaparte and the army ; at the same time application was made to Spain, to open up negotiations with Turkey for their return.

By the kindness of Sir Sidney Smith, Bonaparte was made acquainted with the situation in Europe, though his actual orders failed to reach him. From newspapers supplied him by Smith, his decision was taken to return to Europe with his Staff ; and on 21st August, he sailed from Alexandria, with Berthier, Lannes, Marmont, Murat, Andréossi, Bessières, Duroc, Monge and Berthollet, the Scientists, and Bourienne, his secretary. They embarked in the Muiron and Carrère ; Rear-Admiral Ganteaume had charge of the arrangements, and on the 9th October they landed at Fréjus.

Steps were, however, taken by the Allies to prevent the French Army following at so inopport-

tune a moment, and the Earl of Elgin, who had superseded Spencer Smith at Constantinople, was instructed to dissuade the Turks from repatriating them. There was some doubt as to how far the negotiations had gone, and on 12th December 1799 Pitt wrote to Dundas :

We have had a Cabinet to-day, and agreed on sending immediate orders to our officers in the Mediterranean to disregard any convention for suffering the French to return from Egypt, and to act accordingly, giving notice of their intentions by a flag of truce to the French commander. It was, however, generally felt that, as we determine to prevent the Turks from getting rid of these troublesome visitors, we are bound to make some effort for enabling the Turkish force to act against them with effect. Lord Spencer seemed to think that you had had it at all events in contemplation to propose an expedition from India up the Red Sea ; and if such a plan can be made practicable with an adequate force, it would certainly have much to recommend it. . . . (Request) you will send me your ideas on this subject, as it might be very material, to prevent either disheartening or offending the Porte, that Lord Elgin should be instructed, when he announces our disapprobation of the convention, to accompany that unwelcome communication with some encouraging assurance of our intentions to take effectual steps for co-operating against the enemy, and preventing the consequences of his remaining in Egypt from being attended with danger.

These Orders of the Government reached Lord Keith at Port Mahon, and he forwarded them on to Sir Sidney Smith, together with the following letter, dated 8th January 1800, for General Kléber, who had succeeded to the command of the French Army of the East :

I inform you that I have received positive orders from His Majesty not to consent to any Capitulation

with the French troops which you command in Egypt and Syria, at least unless they lay down their arms, surrender themselves prisoners of war, and deliver up all the ships and stores of the port of Alexandria to the Allied Powers.

In the event of this Capitulation, I cannot permit any of the troops to depart for France before they have been exchanged. I think it equally necessary to inform you, that all vessels having French troops on board and sailing from this with passports from others than those authorized to grant them, will be forced by the officers of the ships which I command to remain in Alexandria. In short, that ships which shall be met returning to Europe with passports granted in consequence of a particular capitulation with one of the Allied Powers, will be retained as prizes, and all individuals on board consigned as prisoners of war.

Unfortunately Sir Sidney Smith, in direct contravention of his Instructions, had been complacently arranging for their transport back to France, with all the honours of war.

... Though measures have been taken for surrounding the French Army on all sides, yet its bravery, courage, and fame, remaining still unconquered, give them full right to believe that they may yet be able to resist for some time. They are therefore by no means in a situation that should oblige them to capitulate; they are fully entitled to retain their arms and baggage. The means to enable them to evacuate Egypt shall be procured to them. The ports of their destination cannot be other but French.¹

The Convention of El Arish was accordingly signed on 24th January, and forwarded to Keith. The Commander-in-Chief forwarded it to the Admiralty, adding that 'Lord Elgin has not

¹ Smith to the French Commissioners, 30th December 1799.

only conceived, but strongly recommended the measure. The Russian Ambassador has by a formal deed consented to the terms.' The Courts of the Allies, however, were highly indignant. 'A most mortifying event,' Grenville called it, in his letter to Minto at Vienna. The Austrians, against whom the French Army would ultimately act, 'will, I doubt not, be very angry that we do not break the capitulation. I really think that, very *strictly* speaking, we have a right to so do ; but I am sure you will agree with us that for such a Country as this, the bringing the public faith even into any sort of question is a thing not to be done for such an object as this would have been.' This was written on 28th March, when the news first became known in England.

Notwithstanding the statement, communicated by Keith, that the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople had formally consented to the terms, the Russian Court by no means approved ; and on 6th May Woronzow received directions from St. Petersburg to protest strongly against Smith's proceedings. From Grenville's reply it appears that Spencer had already written to Keith suggesting the expediency of finding employment elsewhere for Smith ; and the Foreign Secretary read to Woronzow a letter, written by himself at the direction of The King on 28th March, in which the Admiralty were required to direct the Commander-in-Chief, Mediterranean, to express to Sir Sidney Smith the extreme disapprobation of The King at his having dared to negotiate, or mix himself up in these negotiations, for which he had no authority or powers whatsoever ; and for having compromised his Sovereign with his Allies.

The effect of these Orders in Egypt was very

unfortunate. Keith's letter of 8th January 1800 crossed Smith's conveying the signed Convention. On 21st February Smith wrote from Cyprus to inform Kléber of the hitch in the arrangements. He himself proceeded at once to Alexandria to clear up the unpleasant impression created ; but before further communication could be had with Keith, Kléber himself acted. Publishing Keith's letter as a Proclamation to his Army, he called off the negotiations, and completely defeated the Turkish army at Heliopolis. The French proceeded to consolidate their position ; but in June Kléber was assassinated in Cairo. Damas, Desaix, and Davoust had previously returned to France with dispatches narrating the progress of the negotiations, and the command devolved on General Menou—Abdallah Menou, as he is referred to in contemporary writings, he having adopted the Mahomedan faith on the occasion of his marriage in Egypt.

But the possibility of the French armies in Europe receiving reinforcements from overseas during the critical campaigns of 1800 had now been removed. Writing to Minto at Vienna on 3rd June 1800, Grenville says :

I think it is by no means to be regretted that Kléber has broken the Capitulation. One cannot but be sorry for the Turks . . . but Kléber and his Army can annoy us much less where they are than in almost any other possible situation. It is not yet finally decided what orders should be sent to Lord Keith on this subject, and the question is indeed a very difficult one. In the meantime, the delay will prevent any mischief from that army being employed against the Austrians in this campaign at least. . . .

In the meantime the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force had sailed from Portsmouth, on

13th May 1800, in charge of Sir Richard Bickerton, who took out, on board the *Sea Horse*, General Sir Ralph Abercromby and his staff, which included Hutchinson, Moore, and Hope. Their intended destination was North Italy, where the Austrians were successfully laying siege to Genoa, with Keith and the Mediterranean Squadron co-operating; but, as has already been said, before Abercromby could join Keith the situation had completely changed: the French had won the battle of Marengo, and it became necessary to review the whole position in the Mediterranean.

* * * * *

Abercromby and Keith arrived at Gibraltar in September 1800, and were joined there by Sir James Pulteney and the troops who had just come out from home by way of Ferrol and Vigo. An attack on Cadiz was projected, but abandoned; Malta, in the meanwhile, had capitulated, and few objectives now offered for the active employment of the troops.

The threatened invasion of Portugal, it was clear, would call for the employment of a strong force there at some future date: the only immediately pressing problem was Egypt. It was decided to discuss both questions at the same Cabinet Meeting. 'Before I received your box with the papers respecting Portugal,' wrote Pitt to Grenville, 21st September 1800, 'I had a *mémoire* from Dundas respecting Egypt, and a summons for a Cabinet. . . . Both questions must come under consideration at the same time.' The result of the meeting was that the defence of Portugal was entrusted to Pulteney, whilst Egypt, it was decided, should be the objective of Abercromby and the main Expeditionary Force.

Orders to this effect reached Gibraltar on 24th October, and preparations for the campaign began forthwith.

Once approval had been obtained for the Egyptian operations, Dundas began to press vigorously for all available forces to be given to Abercromby, to ensure a successful, as well as a rapid, termination of the campaign. Pulteney was accordingly directed to send his cavalry on to Abercromby; his force was further depleted by withdrawals for the defence of Minorca, and, in a short time, the requirements of home defence demanded the return of his other five battalions. Pulteney in Portugal found himself deprived of practically all his British troops, and in consequence he himself was given the opportunity of joining Abercromby and the Egyptian expedition, or of returning home. He returned to England.

* * * * *

Dundas's time-table for the campaign was that Abercromby would arrive in Egypt by December 1800; the whole service expected of him would be performed without serious resistance or loss; the Indian contingent would arrive about April, and the British troops would be enabled to return and be available for Portugal by April or May 1801.

Circumstances, however, intervened to prevent this. By the middle of December the expedition had arrived in the Levant, but the anticipated Turkish co-operation was not forthcoming. The situation in the north was reacting on Turkish plans. Whether the Czar in his private correspondence with the First Consul was actually proposing combined operations, having India as their

objective, it is not possible to ascertain definitely ; but a Constantinople message of 28th December stated that the Russian Ambassador, General Tamara, had presented to the Sublime Porte a Note, by command of the Czar, demanding that the British troops should not be permitted to act or to land in Egypt, and conveying an intimation that their doing so would be looked upon at the Court of St. Petersburg as an act of hostility against Russia on the part of Turkey. 'This measure,' added *The Times* correspondent, 'has occasioned the most general consternation, and an extraordinary Divan was immediately held, at which the Grand Senior presided.' It is apparent that Elgin, who had superseded Spencer Smith, had more work on his hands than merely collecting marbles.

It was not until the 6th April that news was received from Constantinople that Keith and Abercromby had sailed from the Bay of Marmaras on 22nd February, and the expedition against Egypt was at last under weigh.

* * * * *

Meanwhile the French outlook as regards Egypt had changed. It was now no longer a question of recovering the Army of the East for operations in the European theatre of war ; the possibility now offered of saving the Colony for France. Steps were taken to fit out such ships as remained in Mediterranean ports, and relief was sent by them to Alexandria. Unfortunately Bruix had brought away practically the whole Mediterranean force, both French and Spanish, with him to Brest, where it was now closely blockaded. It was therefore necessary to get part at any rate of this force back to the

Mediterranean ; orders were given for a detachment to undertake the attempt, and the command of the squadron was given to Ganteaume, who had brought the First Consul back from Egypt.

No attempt at secrecy was made, but it was given out that the destination of the squadron was St. Domingo, passage being afforded to those wishing to go to the West Indies. On the evening of the 23rd January the squadron sailed ; and the Paris papers, quoted in *The Times* of 9th February, announced that the squadron had consisted of Vice-Admiral Ganteaume, in the Indivisible (80), and Rear-Admiral Linois, in the Formidable (80) ; together with the Indomptable (80), Dessaix (74), Jean Bart (74), Dix Août (74), Constitution (74), Créole (40), Bravoure (40), and Vautour (14). Generals Sahuguet, in command of the troops, and Lescallier were amongst others on board the Indivisible.

The squadron arrived at Toulon on 17th February, and the Paris papers of 28th February published Ganteaume's letter of proceedings, dated 10th February, whilst still at sea :

Having been discovered on our route by many neutral ships—being obliged by circumstances to enter the Straights, and pass before Gibraltar in the day-time ; it being consequently impossible any longer to conceal the circumstances of our being in this sea, I have thought it my duty to send you an account of everything relating to our Squadron up to the present day.

Having sailed from Brest on the evening of the 23rd of January, with a very strong North wind, we found ourselves, in the course of the night, involved in the passage of l'Yroise, with very bad weather. In spite of the precautions which I had taken to prevent a separation, it was impossible for us to continue together. The order in which I caused the Squadron to depart

was the order of battle, the Indivisible being the foremost ship. The vessels were to keep very close to each other, that they might be able to fight with advantage in case of being met by the enemy ; but it was quite dark, and the squalls came on with such force, that, almost all the vessels having their rigging much injured, none of them were in a condition to follow me, or to preserve any order. The Formidable, which was behind the Indivisible, had her three top-masts carried away by the violence of the wind, almost at the Point of St. Mathieu ; the Dix d'Août was obliged to go out of its course, in order to give assistance to the Vautour Lugger, which, having shipped a heavy sea, was on the point of sinking. The Constitution also, after having doubled Point St. Mathieu, lost her main top-mast. At length all these ships were dispersed, and remained behind. After having waited for them more than two hours, and not seeing any of them, I took the route which I had marked out for myself. On the following day there was only the Créole Frigate in company with me ; the weather continued dreadful. The Indivisible lost her main top-mast at six in the morning. During the night we acquired, by means of lights, a knowledge of the enemy's division, which we knew to be stationed at some distance. In the course of the day we were not discovered by any ship.

In hopes of finding again, at the place of rendezvous, the ships that were separated, I was anxious to repair thither, by making all the sail I could. Our navigation to this point offered nothing interesting ; we had visited some neutral vessels, which gave us no information, and we did not see the shadow of an English vessel, either of war or otherwise. On the 29th ult., we were exactly at the rendezvous which I had fixed upon for the Squadron. A corvette was discovered to the windward of us ; she made such signals as made me suppose she was an enemy ; we chased her all day, and it was not till after a great deal of difficulty that we came up with and took her at nine o'clock at night. She was a ship belonging to the King of England, called the

Incendiary, armed with 28 guns, which had been sent from Gibraltar to Admiral Warren for the purpose of watching us.

This capture was a good augury for us. The day after we met the *Formidable*, which had not met with anything interesting in her passage: and on the 2nd inst. all the rest of the vessels joined us. Captain Moncoulu, of the *Indomptable*, had got them all together on the 23rd and 24th. I was then informed of the damages which the vessels had sustained, and which, during the terrible weather that prevailed on the night of our departure, was the sole cause of our separation.

That officer informed me that he had been at different times observed by some of the enemy's frigates, which he had been unable to chase, as he did not wish to lose a moment in repairing to the rendezvous which I had pointed out to him. Having, however, been at Cape Finisterre during the night, and learnt by the signals of the Frigate *la Bravoure* that there were some ships which were at no great distance from the division to which she belonged, that frigate followed them rather too far, and had an action with an English frigate. *La Bravoure* attacked the enemy within pistol-shot, and the English frigate boldly expected the attack. It appears that our frigate was of inferior force, as the enemy's guns were 18-pounders; yet the latter, after an engagement which lasted half an hour, in which we attempted to board her, made the best of her way with all the sails she could carry. Captain Dordelin, who was at a great distance from his division, was unable to pursue her, and returned to his squadron.

. . . *La Bravoure* lost in the engagement 10 men.
. . . She had 24 wounded. . . .

It is with infinite satisfaction, Citizen Minister, that I can, in concluding my letter, give you a pleasing account of the patriotic spirit which pervades the Squadron. Emulation, zeal, and an unbounded ardour are common to all the Captains, and there is not one on whom the Commander-in-Chief cannot place an equal degree of reliance.

Postscript.—On the 10th February, Admiral Ganteaume captured the Sprightly Cutter of 14 guns, which had been dispatched by Lord Keith.

On the 13th, at break of day, an English frigate appearing to observe us with great confidence, the signal was made for a general chase, and she was cut off and captured. She proved to be the Success of 40 guns.

This letter, published in the Paris papers, was copied into our own papers of the 7th March ; and it was thus authoritatively known in England that Ganteaume had entered the Mediterranean ; further, from a paragraph in the *Journal du Commerce* of 27th February, it was understood that he had actually arrived at Toulon.

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As has been said, no attempt had been made to conceal the approaching sailing of Ganteaume's squadron from Brest, and full warning was in the possession of the Commander-in-Chief of the Channel Fleet. St. Vincent was at that time on shore at Tor Abbey, and the fleet was at sea under Sir Henry Harvey, who was second in command in the absence of Sir Hyde Parker on leave.

On 20th January Harvey had brought the fleet into Torbay ; during his absence, Ganteaume sailed on the evening of the 23rd. Bad weather had brought Harvey in, and on the 23rd he sailed again, being off Brest next morning. A Particular Service Squadron, stored and victualled for foreign service, had been detailed in anticipation of the French sailing ; and in view of the intelligence that the destination of the French would be St. Domingo, Sir Robert Calder had been appointed to command the detachment. 'I placed Sir R. Calder at the head of detachment, because he was

the only Flag Officer, in a 3-decked ship, junior to Rear-Admiral Duckworth,' wrote St. Vincent to Spencer (7th February 1801). Duckworth, at that time, was in command of the Leeward Islands station.

Harvey, however, showed considerable indecision in making the detachment : indeed, Calder does not appear to have parted company before the 9th February, though suspicions had been aroused a fortnight before that the French had sailed, the *Nymphé* having reconnoitred the harbour of Brest on the 25th January. Upon the arrival of the *Nymphé* at Plymouth, on the 23rd February, it became publicly known that Calder was seventeen days behind Ganteaume, and that the chances that had been held out to the public of his catching him were practically hopeless. He had with him the *Prince of Wales* (98), flying his flag, *Pompée* (84), *Juste* (84), *Spencer* (74), *Montague* (74), *Courageux* (74), *Cumberland* (74), and two frigates—the *Thames*, 32 (Captain Lukin), and the *Magicienne*, 32 (Captain Ogilvie). By the Lisbon mail, brought by the King George packet on 2nd March, it was known that he had arrived off Lisbon, and sent the *Montague* in for repairs, that ship having been dismasted in a gale off Ferrol. On the 26th February he was off Madeira, making for the Canaries and then for Martinique. But before this news reached England it was known that Ganteaume had entered the Mediterranean and that the destination given Calder was wrong : to recall him, however, was impossible, and the Squadron carried on for the West Indies. On 22nd April they left Jamaica for home, and reaching the Channel received Admiralty orders to rejoin the Channel Fleet. On 4th June the *Prince of Wales*, flying Calder's flag, came in to

Portsmouth to refit ; she sailed again on the 15th and joined Cornwallis off Brest.

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For some while uncertainty existed as to Ganteaume's movements. Upon the announcement in the French Press that Ganteaume was in command, the presumption was made that Egypt was his destination. His previous services had been in those seas : in 1796 he had been reported in the Aegean ; he had been First Captain (*Chef d'Etat-Major*) of the fleet flagship in the Expedition to Egypt, and on 6th July 1798 Bonaparte had recommended his promotion to Rear-Admiral, calling him 'officier du plus grand mérite, aussi distingué par son zèle que par son expérience et ses connaissances.' This was in the dispatch announcing the successful landing of the French Army at Aboukir ; and in the Battle of the Nile, immediately afterwards, he was wounded, but escaped from the burning Orient and reached the shore. He had succeeded as S.N.O. Egypt, and accompanying Bonaparte into Palestine, he had subsequently brought him back to France.

This inference that Egypt would be Ganteaume's destination was confirmed by the reports which began to reach the Commander-in-Chief from vessels sighting the Squadron. The *Immortalité* sighted them, and, sending back the intelligence, hung on to them, shadowing them for three days. 'Captain Hotham has acted very much like an officer,' wrote St. Vincent to Spencer, 3rd February, on receiving the *Immortalité's* report, 'and if he is correct in the course the Frenchman steered, they are certainly bound into the Mediterranean ; for had they been destined to the East or West Indies, and to touch at the

Canary Islands, they would have kept more to the westward, out of the way of our cruizers. It is a pleasant circumstance they were so roughly treated by the elements.' The same day the *Concorde* (Captain R. Barton) from Lisbon came into Plymouth, and reported having fallen in with the French Squadron on 26th January, thirty leagues off Finisterre, and having engaged and crippled one of their frigates.

The news from Portugal, however, raised a doubt as to whether the French objective was not actually the Portuguese colonies; and St. Vincent, writing privately to Nepean, on 7th February, had to admit the probability of the theory. 'I think it more than probable that the French Squadron has the Brazils for its destination: the possession of that noble country would amply make up for the loss of their other Colonies, and the devastation of St. Domingo.' At Lisbon the view was strongly held, and was accordingly communicated to Calder on his arrival off the port.

It was the first week in March before it was definitely known in England that the Squadron had passed Gibraltar and its destination was Egypt.

The French newspapers, which brought news of Ganteaume's arrival at Toulon, brought other news too of importance. *The Times*, 7th March 1801, transcribing Ganteaume's letter of proceedings, adds:

The object of this Expedition is thus ascertained, and it is observed by Admiral Ganteaume that its passage into the Mediterranean removes all mystery. It may be hoped, however, from the information received from other quarters, that the fate of Egypt will be decided before Admiral Ganteaume can be upon the spot, even

supposing he should have the good fortune to arrive there undiscovered by the British squadrons.

According to an account inserted in the official paper of Bonaparte, dated the 10th of January, from Constantinople, Lord Keith had disembarked the first division of the troops, consisting of 52 transports, in the Gulf of Macri, a port in the Turkish province of Natolia, nearly opposite the island of Rhodes. The remainder of the forces were shortly expected.

Sir Richard Bickerton was directed to cruize before Alexandria, with 4 ships of the line and 4 frigates, in order (says the *Moniteur*) to intercept 2 ships of the line and 4 frigates, which are said to have sailed with reinforcements from Toulon. It is reported that 3 of these frigates had already entered Alexandria. What is more certain from the context of this letter . . . is, that the French despair of the safety of their flourishing colony, in the event that no relief shall be thrown into it, either from Toulon or Brest. They express confidence in case their army shall be unanimous, and shall not plot to return to Europe.

The French were obviously alive to the fact that the decisive moment was coming for the Army of Egypt, and were making every effort to run supplies in before Aboukir should be closed. Ganteaume was hastened again to sea, and on the 19th February the Press Censor forbade all reference to his proceedings. 'Have the goodness, Citizen Minister,' wrote the First Consul to the Minister of General Police, 'to address a short circular to the editors of the fourteen Journals, forbidding the insertion of any article calculated to afford the enemy the slightest clue to the different movements which are taking place in our Squadrons, unless the intelligence be derived from the official journal.'

In consequence, very little was gleaned in England of Ganteaume's movements. The

Moniteur, of the 5th March, reported the capture of a transport, going from Malta to Minorca, with women on board belonging to Abercromby's army, from which it was presumed he was again at sea. The first news from a British source was the intelligence brought by the *Princessa*, merchantman, from Smyrna, which arrived in the Downs on 21st March. Captain Lee, the master, had sailed from Smyrna on 29th January, and on 16th February, off Minorca, had been warned that the French fleet were at sea, by the *Minerve*, *Pearl*, and *Santa Teresa*, of the Mediterranean fleet; our frigates were making for Toulon; on the 18th he anchored at Port Mahon. A few hours afterwards, Sir John Warren in the *Renown*, with the *Gibraltar*, *Dragon*, and *Pelican*, arrived from the westward. Warren had come in from Cadiz, and he laid an embargo on all shipping; the *Princessa*, however, was permitted to leave, and sailed on the evening of the 19th February. Just as she passed Fort St. Philip, the *London*, merchantman, also from Smyrna, anchored, and her master told Lee that the day before he had been on board the *Sybelle*, transport, from Malta to Mahon. She had been captured on the 16th by the French fleet, which had also captured the *Success* frigate and *Sprightly* cutter; finding that the *Sybelle* had only women on board they had released her. The French were last reported steering N.N.E.

Whether Ganteaume had entered Toulon, or made direct for Alexandria, was long in doubt. Paris papers of the 24th March reported the safe arrival of the *Justice* and *Egyptienne* at Alexandria from Toulon, having on board 15,000 stand of arms, ammunition, and 500 Troops, of whom 100 were artillerymen; this was on the 3rd February, and it was evident that the blockade was not

a very close one. It was not until the 5th April that further news was received of him, when a Messenger from our Minister at Florence arrived with intelligence that the French had sailed from Toulon after refitting, but that they had run into Warren's frigates and in consequence returned to Toulon, where they were now blockaded. This intelligence was confirmed by advices from the *Mutine*, sloop, which reported Ganteaume had sailed on the 17th March, but put back again on the 19th. Toulon, however, was not blockaded; and on the 19th, Ganteaume sailed again. On the 8th May a lieutenant of a cutter arrived at the Admiralty from Gibraltar, bringing advice that Warren had chased Ganteaume's squadron on the 4th April but lost sight of them during the night. They were believed to have returned again to Toulon, and the following day this information was supplemented by letters brought by Lieutenant Truscott, of the *Joseph*, cutter, which had left Minorca on the 7th April—where the *Mutine*, sloop, had arrived, having fallen in with Ganteaume whilst cruising between Sardinia and Malta, and reported the French squadron to have been steering for Toulon, with two of their ships disabled, having lost their foremasts.

The *Joseph* further reported that on the 22nd April she had been chased by four sail of Spanish battleships, from Brest, and on the following day by five more, from whom she had with difficulty escaped. There were indeed signs of considerable activity at sea; for Keith's dispatches, received 24th April, had reported the capture by the *Phoebe* (36), Captain Barlow, of the French frigate *Africaine* (44) from Toulon, off Egypt. The *Africaine* had 300 picked troops on board, together with arms, stores, and a quantity of

ammunition ; her consort, however, the *Régénérée*, had got away and succeeded in entering Alexandria.

It was the news brought by the *Joseph*, cutter, of Ganteaume's defects and the locating of his squadron in the Western Mediterranean, that St. Vincent termed ' a very pleasant history ' in his letter of 9th May to Sir Charles Grey : for the *Joseph* was bringing dispatches from Egypt, reporting the landing at Aboukir. These are published in the *London Gazette* of 9th May 1801, and contain letters from Abercromby to Hobart of 16th March, and from Keith to the Admiralty of 18th March ; but Abercromby's letter of 16th March to Elgin, at Constantinople, had already been received overland via Constantinople and Vienna, and published in an *Extraordinary Gazette* of Sunday, 2nd May. The French, however, had received the news much earlier. On the 16th March the brig *Osiris* got away from Alexandria with an account of the landing on the 8th, and reached Toulon on 15th April. The Paris papers of the 16th containing the news reached London on the 19th, and very full details from French sources had filled the London journals on 20th April.

It was the 15th May before details of the battle of the 21st March were received ; the repulse of the French counter-attack and the death of Abercromby were communicated in Keith's letter of 1st April to the Admiralty. This news, published in an *Extraordinary Gazette*, 1st May 1801, was brought by Lieutenant Robert Corbet, who sailed from Egypt on the 7th April in the *Flora*, frigate (Captain R. G. Middleton). Middleton, who was Lord Barham's nephew, also brought down the Mediterranean the body of Abercromby, which was landed for burial at Malta.

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With the news that the French counter-attack had failed, renewed efforts were made to hasten the sailing of Ganteaume's squadron. The *Osiris* reached Toulon on the 15th April, and on the 24th Ganteaume sailed again ; from that time till the 22nd July, when he anchored again in Toulon Roads, his movements were a continual mystery.

Immediately upon sailing, his ships were affected with a contagious fever which caused heavy casualties amongst the crews and military embarked : so much so, that he put into Leghorn—and divided his squadron—the sick being transferred to the *Formidable*, *Indomptable* and *Dessaix*, which he put under Rear-Admiral Linois, directing him to return with them to Toulon. Ganteaume himself proceeded with the rest of the squadron to Messina, where he remained for some time ; it was understood that he expected to be joined by the Neapolitan frigates which the French were negotiating for. On the 1st June he sailed from Messina ; and the Paris journals, copied into our papers of 21st July, announced that accounts had been received of his having landed at Derna, in Tripoli, from which place his army of 8000 men were to set out, on a five days' march of nearly 200 miles, for Alexandria. Ganteaume himself was reported to be returning immediately to Toulon.

The squadron was actually returning. On the 22nd it arrived at Toulon, and the *Moniteur* of the 23rd contained an account of its proceedings, including the capture of the *Swiftsure* (Captain Benjamin Hallowell) on 24th June. Hallowell's narrative is in the *London Gazette*, 22nd December 1801 ; he reported being off Cape Derna on the 24th June, making for Malta, when he

sighted the French squadron. He was already aware, from information received from Lieutenant Sheppard, of the Pigmy, cutter, on the 19th, that an enemy squadron had left Durazzo on the 7th June, where they were reported to have attempted to land their troops. He himself surrendered after an action. On the 4th July, between Lampedusa and Pantelleria, some merchant vessels had been captured, and on 22nd July the squadron anchored at Toulon, 'in general very sickly, without having landed any part of their troops on the coast of Egypt or Barbary, although they attempted a debarkation at Derna on the 23rd June, but, from the hostile appearance and reception of the natives, they did not persevere, and returned to their ships without landing a single person.'

Ganteaume had not returned, however, without making some attempt to get relief into Alexandria direct from the sea. The corvette *Héliopolis* was sent on, with accompanying transports, to attempt the run, and the *Héliopolis* herself managed to get in; the others, however, were captured, and from the statements of prisoners Keith was informed of Ganteaume's movements.

The prisoners stated that Ganteaume had sent 3 ships of the line and a frigate to Toulon, with sick men. He had appeared upon the coast with 4 ships of the line and a frigate, and some smaller vessels, with 3000 troops on board, very sickly. He intended to land to the west of the Tower of the Arabs, and ordered 10 pounds of bread and 2 bottles of water for each man. By a mistake in his reckoning, however, he anchored at Locuste, 50 leagues to the west, and there heard from a Greek that Lord Keith was off the Tower of the Arabs. He examined the coast and found it impracticable. He

was now discovered by some of the frigates ; upon which he cut his cables and stood to sea, after which nothing more was heard of him.

One of Ganteaume's difficulties was certainly his shortage of victuals. According to the account of a Swiss, in the *Zurich Gazette*, his capture of the Swiftsure and his other prizes was very fortunate for him, for, even with the supplies thus obtained, the daily ration of the squadron was only a glass of water, half a glass of brandy, half a pound of salt beef, and three-quarters of a pound of biscuit per man ;² and Jérôme Bonaparte, the youngest brother of the First Consul, who had sailed with Ganteaume in the Indivisible, spoke similarly of the shortage. 'He stated that the soldiers and sailors had suffered a great deal, during the expedition, from the want of water and provisions ; and it was bad weather alone which prevented the landing of the troops on the coast of Egypt, within forty leagues of Alexandria, since the Squadron remained two days in sight of the shore, without seeing any of the English or the inhabitants.'

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In the meanwhile, Sir John Warren, who had been in command off Cadiz, had left his station on receiving intelligence of the French Squadron and gone in pursuit. Ganteaume passed the Straits on the 9th February, and on the 10th Warren reached Gibraltar. From thence he made for Minorca, where he remained some while, covering that island, and awaiting developments. An officer in the Squadron, whose letter, dated

¹ Letter from an Officer in Keith's Fleet, 12th June 1801, in *The Times*, 26th August 1801.

² *The Times*, 13th November 1801.

³ *Ibid.*, 5th October 1801.

23rd April 1801, appears in *The Times* of 10th July 1801, gives an account of his further proceedings :

On the 4th of March last we sailed from Mahon Roads with four sail of the line : the Haarlem with some guns on her lower deck, and the Mercury frigate, in quest of Ganteaume's Squadron of seven sail of the line.

On the 7th we spoke two vessels, who gave us the intelligence that the King of Naples had concluded a treaty with the French, and that in consequence they had been obliged to quit that port. Conceiving it possible, I imagine, that the appearance of our Squadron off Palermo, where the King was, might induce him to revoke such a measure, we proceeded to that port, but learned from Mr. Paget, the British Minister, that the King could not protect himself, and must submit to the terms imposed on him by the French. The Champion frigate was dispatched to Malta to order the Alexander and Athenien to join us off Maritimo. We stood for the Bay of Naples, where some Russian frigates were lying in the Mole : a Neapolitan frigate was laying outside them in the Bay, whose Captain came off to us, for the purpose of protecting the neutrality of the port. Our object not being to involve an ancient Ally in fresh difficulties, we stood back for Maritimo, where, on the 18th, the Athenien joined : the Alexander had left Malta a short time before, and had parted company with her. On the 22nd she joined us near the small island of Galita, on the African side. We were proceeding off Toulon, when on the 25th, in the morning, we fell in with the Salamine, brig, which informed us that the French had sailed from Toulon on the 19th, and were supposed to be bound for Egypt. We stood immediately to the eastward, and on the succeeding morning, about ten leagues to the east of Sardinia, we got sight of them at daylight. The wind was variable, inclining to calm. We immediately made all sail in chase, and kept sight of them till night, but without gaining upon them. We continued the chase all night, the Mercury being ahead,

but I am sorry to say that in the morning they were out of sight. I suspect they hauled to the northward.

Knowing they had 4000 troops on board, and that Bonaparte had sent his Aide-de-Camp, Duroc, to order Ganteaume to sea, we had no doubt that their object was to reinforce their army in Egypt, and therefore made the best of our way off Alexandria, in the hope of again meeting them. We sent ashore to the islands of Maritimo and Pantelleria, laying off and on between Sicily and Cape Bon for intelligence, but could obtain none. Light airs, calms, and contrary winds prevented our arrival here till last Sunday, when we fell in with two of Lord Keith's cruizers, and from them learnt [of the Army's proceedings]. . . . We joined Lord Keith next morning (April 20) and found him standing off and on Alexandria, with 7 sail of the line, frigates, etc. ; and Petowna Bey, the Turkish Vice-Admiral, with 2 sail of the line, sloops, etc. The Captain Pacha is laying in Aboukir Bay in a 3-decker, with 2 sail of the line.

Warren, upon his arrival off Alexandria, heard that his only son, George John Borlase Warren, who had left the Navy in 1798 and joined the Guards, had fallen in action at Aboukir. As appears from St. Vincent's letters, both to him and to Keith, the blow very severely affected the Admiral, and permission was sent him to return home. In the meantime, however, he returned to the Western Mediterranean, but Ganteaume having regained Toulon, Warren proceeded to the assistance of Lieut.-Colonel George Airey, who was being besieged in Porto Ferrajo. On 3rd August the *Carrière* was captured by the squadron ; and on 2nd September the *Success*, which Ganteaume had taken on 13th February, was recaptured, and the *Bravoure* driven ashore, near Leghorn. On the 14th September the squadron landed a reinforcement of Corsicans and Maltese, and in the fighting lost a number of

officers of the squadron. The news of the armistice was brought from Toulon on the 11th October, and, hostilities being at an end, Warren came home in *La Minerve* frigate, arriving at Portsmouth on the 1st December 1801.

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The operations in Egypt had, meanwhile, been brought to a successful conclusion. Throughout, the news from Egypt was received in Paris long in advance of its receipt in London, and our earliest information was always obtained from the French newspapers. The return of cartels with invalids and prisoners of war to Toulon provided the French Press with narratives of the fighting and of the progress of negotiations, and these were reproduced in our own Press some time before official confirmation could reach England.

The command of the Army had passed to Hely-Hutchinson on Abercromby's death, and steps were taken at home to send out all possible reinforcements to him on receipt of the news of the success of the landing. The Guards reinforcements sailed, in the *Active* and *Leda*, on 24th May 1801; and the 25th and 26th Regiments, in the *Agincourt* and *Madras*, on 31st May. These detachments necessarily denuded the Home Defence forces, at a moment when the French invasion threat was beginning to assume a serious aspect; and orders for increased vigilance were issued accordingly at home.

On 5th June a *London Gazette Extraordinary* announced the surrender of Rosetta to us, and of Damietta and Cairo to the Turks, and brought news from Egypt up to 20th April; further letters from Lord Elgin at Constantinople, communi-

cated to the Press of 18th June, containing news up to the beginning of May, reported the arrival of Admiral Blankett at Suez with Baird's force from Bengal and Bombay. The surrender of Rahmanieh on 10th May, and the advance on Cairo, were announced in the *London Gazette Extraordinary* of 29th June; and, as *The Times* commented on the following day, 'What remains to be done is the certain effect of time, and will be accomplished, it is probable, with little further effusion of human blood.' By the overland Hamburg mail, received 12th August, came the news of the surrender of Cairo; and on 22nd August Major Montresor arrived in London with dispatches announcing the fall of Cairo and the proposed convention to be offered to Menou at Alexandria.

The terms, however, were refused by Menou, and the *Moniteur* of 9th September reported the arrival of the pink, *La Santa Madona Didra*, from Alexandria on 14th July, with dispatches from Menou communicating his determination to hold out to the last. It was not until 2nd October that a messenger arrived at the Foreign Office from Elgin at Constantinople, bringing Keith's dispatches of 29th August, which announced the complete investment of Alexandria by Hely-Hutchinson on the 17th August; the carrying of the outworks by general assault, and the proposal by Menou on the 27th August to an armistice of three days, which had been acceded to.

News of the actual fall of Alexandria had not yet reached England by the 3rd October, on which day the newspapers published the announcement of the signature of the Preliminaries of Peace. However, agreement as to the fate of Egypt had already been arrived at, and on 9th October the

Preliminaries of Peace between Turkey and France were signed at Paris, by which the French agreed to evacuate the entire province of Egypt and to restore it to Turkey.

Menou capitulated as a result of the three days' armistice, and on 22nd September Sir Sidney Smith and Colonel Abercromby arrived at Malta, carrying the dispatches to England, and proceeded home in the frigate *El Carmen*. 'Yesterday morning at 8 o'clock,' says *The Times* of 11th November 1801, 'Sir Sidney Smith arrived at the Admiralty from Portsmouth. . . . Sir Sidney was attired in the Turkish dress, turban, robe, shawl, and girdle round his waist, with a brace of pistols'; in commenting on which, the newspaper added, 'His services do not stand in need of personal singularity to set them off.' The naval and military dispatches were published in the *London Gazette*, 14th November 1801.

On the 12th November the thanks of the two Houses of Parliament were moved for the services of the navy and the army in Egypt, and on 7th December the grant of Baronies in the United Kingdom to both Keith and Hutchinson were announced in the Press. Keith had already left Egypt for Malta, where his presence was desired, arising out of the negotiations for the occupation of the Island under the coming Peace Treaty; on the 7th September Keith handed over the command in Egypt to Sir Richard Bickerton, and himself sailed on the 11th September. On 20th March 1802 he arrived at Gibraltar, awaiting orders to return to England; and on 20th June he sailed for home, leaving Sir Richard Bickerton Senior Officer in the Mediterranean. On 3rd July the *Foudroyant*, flying his flag, arrived at Portsmouth, and the following day he struck his flag.

On the 23rd, Saumarez in the *Cæsar* arrived at Spithead from Gibraltar, Rear-Admiral Bickerton having been left behind as Commander-in-Chief, Mediterranean, during the peace.

(b) CADIZ AND PORTUGAL

There had been many indications of the approaching storm in Portugal during 1800, but every threat had passed harmlessly away. In April 1800 Abercromby had been offered, and had accepted, the appointment as Head of a Military Mission to Portugal, but upon the resignation of Sir Charles Stuart, Commander-in-Chief of the Military Forces in the Mediterranean, Abercromby had succeeded him in that command.

Following upon Marengo, the First Consul turned his direction towards Portugal, and on 27th August 1800 Grenville wrote to Minto :

Bonaparte is pressing the Court of Lisbon, through Madrid, to conclude a separate peace with him, paying him a large sum of money for it. They have really hitherto shown a great degree of firmness at Lisbon on this subject, but the course of the late events may well have its operation on stronger nerves than theirs.

The great argument that Spain uses is the certainty that Austria will make a separate peace, and that France will then turn all her armies against Portugal, to wound us through them, since she cannot do it directly.

The renewal of hostilities with Austria gave the First Consul other employment for his forces, and the Portuguese question was temporarily shelved. We ourselves were able to take advantage of the European situation to review our own commitments to Portugal. It had been decided that Sir James Pulteney should take command in

Portugal, with a strong force to garrison the country; the requirements in Egypt and elsewhere, however, drew off more and more of his forces, so that by the end of the year Pulteney himself returned home, and the auxiliaries in Lisbon were reduced practically to the Emigré Regiments. However, it was the hope of the Cabinet that the Egyptian campaign would be over before there could be any call for intervention—for nobody anticipated the overwhelming defeat of Austria at Hohenlinden.

His advantage gained at Hohenlinden was rapidly followed up by the First Consul. The Treaty of Lunéville was signed on 9th February 1801, but already the First Consul had begun action against Portugal. On 3rd February *The Times* drew attention to the reports in the Paris papers foreshadowing a Spanish offensive at an early date, unless Portugal prevented it by a voluntary capitulation to France. The French demands, however—an indemnity of twenty million livres, part of the Brazils, the shutting of Portuguese ports against Great Britain, and the garrisoning by French troops of Lisbon and Oporto—these the Portuguese Government felt itself unable to accept, and on 17th March letters arrived by the Lisbon packet, announcing that Spain had declared war on Portugal on 28th February, dismissing from Madrid the Portuguese representative, and on 5th March Portugal had in her turn proclaimed war on Spain.

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The threat of an invasion of Portugal, it has already been stated, was introduced by the First Consul during the peace discussions as a counter-move to the British landing at Alexandria. The

pressure exerted by France on Spain, to undertake operations against Portugal, increased as the situation in Egypt went against the French ; and as the necessity for Spanish action became more and more urgent, Lucien Bonaparte, the French Ambassador, and General St. Cyr and Admiral Dumanoir were instructed to expedite Spanish movements.

It was the hope of the First Consul to create a Mediterranean fleet of sufficient strength to get his reinforcements into Alexandria ; and although the main Spanish fleet had been brought by Bruix into Brest, there still remained in the various Spanish ports sufficient ships to form a respectable force. From the ships remaining at Cadiz and Ferrol, together with the Rochefort Squadron, it was hoped to get together about twenty ships, to enable a force of 10,000 men to be transported from Otranto to the African coast.

The return of Rear-Admiral Linois with the *Formidable*, *Indomptable*, and *Dessaix*, bringing back the invalids of Ganteaume's Squadron, had taken place in the beginning of May ; on 25th June Linois sailed with these three ships and the frigate *Muiron*, from Toulon for Cadiz, where it was intended that he should take over the six ships commissioned there by Dumanoir, and should pick up also the Rochefort Squadron. On 4th July he arrived at Algeciras and learnt for the first time that a British squadron was off Cadiz, instead of that port being open, owing to Warren's Squadron having proceeded up the Mediterranean in pursuit of Ganteaume.

The British squadron was the detachment under Sir James Saumarez from the Channel Fleet which had sailed from Plymouth on 15th June, and arrived off the Tagus on the 26th June. Here

Saumarez had received an account from Captain Morris of the *Phaeton* that the Spanish ships in Cadiz showed signs of being about to put to sea, and he had accordingly proceeded off Cadiz. On 5th July he received intelligence by a dispatch-boat from Gibraltar that three French ships of the line and a frigate had been seen on the 1st, endeavouring to pass the Straits from the eastward; and the Plymouth lugger brought news that the French, after being three days endeavouring to pass the Straits, had anchored off Algeciras; their destination was presumed to be Cadiz.

Circumstances had led to the detachment of a squadron from England at just the favourable moment, and Saumarez arrived from the Atlantic as Linois was emerging from the Mediterranean.

* * * * *

General Simon Fraser, who was in command of the British forces in Portugal, made Oporto his G.H.Q., and H.R.H. Prince Augustus Frederick [afterwards Duke of Sussex] reviewed the Emigré Regiments, reporting highly on their soldierlike appearance; none the less, there was little likelihood of any real resistance being offered to a resolute Franco-Spanish advance. Meanwhile, French preparations were pushed on, and on 15th April 1801 General Le Clerc, commanding the Corps of Observation of the Gironde, reviewed at Bayonne the 1st Division of the French Army of Invasion of Portugal, consisting of 10,000 men and thirty pieces of artillery, under marching orders for the Peninsula. On 28th April General Monket reported to Le Clerc his arrival at Burgos.

Portugal, however, had already begun overtures for peace, and on 16th April D'Arranjo

embarked in a Portuguese frigate for L'Orient, to proceed to France to effect a pacification. 'The Prince Regent,' adds a Lisbon message of 16th April in *The Times*, 9th May 1801, 'has sent orders to his Generals on the frontiers not to commit any hostilities, as he is in hopes of terminating the business amicably. All the Auxiliary Troops, excepting the Hospital, have been embarked on board the ships of war. . . .' On 20th May the Paris papers announced the arrival of D'Arranjo at L'Orient.

Meanwhile in our own Houses of Parliament attention had been drawn to affairs in Portugal: in the Lords, on the occasion of the debates on the Portuguese Subsidy, 20th May; in the Commons, on 2nd June, when Pitt replied to Grey's suggestion, during the debate on Egypt, that Portugal would have been a better stage for the Egyptian warriors to act on.

On 4th June Captain Day arrived express at the Admiralty, bringing advices that the Chevalier de Pinto, Portuguese Minister for Foreign Affairs, had set out from Lisbon with full powers to negotiate and sign a Treaty of Peace with the French and Spanish Governments. It was actually a capitulation.

The reports of activity in the Spanish dockyards, however, required some action on the part of the Admiralty. The escape of the Spanish squadron from Ferrol and its arrival at Cadiz on 25th April was accompanied by rumours of an expedition fitting out at Carthageña, possibly for Egypt, or perhaps to recover Minorca, which was known to be weakly held, its garrison having been reduced to reinforce the forces in Egypt. The Spanish coasts were practically unwatched, since Warren had joined Keith in Egypt, and

Sir James Saumarez was therefore detached from the Channel Fleet by the Admiralty, on 6th June 1801, to occupy the Cadiz Station. On the 15th June he sailed from Plymouth with his flag in the *Cæsar* (84), Captain Brenton; *Pompée* (84), Captain Stirling; *Spencer* (74), Captain Darby; *Hannibal* (74), Captain Ferris; *Audacious* (74), Captain Peard; *Thames* (32), Captain Lukin; Admiral Sir T. Pasley (16), Lieutenant Woollidge; and the Plymouth, lugger; the *Superb* (74), Captain Keats, and *Venerable* (74), Captain Hood, joined at sea.

On 26th June the Squadron was off the Tagus and Saumarez was joined by the *Phæton* (Captain Morris) from Lisbon. The state of affairs in Lisbon at that moment is described in letters from Lisbon, written by a passenger on the Lisbon packet, *Earl Gower*, which had been captured by the French privateer *Télégraphe* (Captain Seille) off the Tagus. The *Earl Gower* had, amongst other passengers on board, Commissioner Towry of the Navy Office and three clerks of the Victualling Office, going to audit the Victualling Accounts at Lisbon.

In a letter from Cadiz, on 28th May, this correspondent wrote :

Six Spanish sail of the line are here at present, with an Admiral: these ships were at Ferrol, when Sir J. Pulteney was there. There is also a French Admiral here named Dumanoir, as all privateers are embargoed in the ports of Spain and the crews are to be put on board the Spanish ships. A large body of French seamen and troops are every moment expected. A grand expedition is forming, but not known where it is to be sent.

A further letter from Lisbon, dated 29th June 1801, is printed in *The Times* of 14th July 1801 :

. . . In my last letter I informed you of our being captured and carried into Cadiz. The Captain and officers of the Privateer behaved to us in the most handsome manner. When the passengers left the ship, their trunks were not opened. On going on shore we were treated by the Spaniards with the utmost attention and politeness, though, since the threatened bombardment last summer, the people of this country have cherished a dislike of the English.

There are at Cadiz six sail of the line ready for sea, under the command of Admiral Massaredo, just returned from Brest (these are the ships which were at Ferrol when Sir J. Pulteney was there): besides them, there are six sail of Spanish ships of the line, given by the Spaniards to the French. These ships are commanded by Contre-Amiral Le Pelley, Captain of one of the frigates which returned from Egypt with Bonaparte. This Squadron only waits for their crews, expected from France in two frigates. There are also 12 sail of the line at the Caraccas, 2 leagues from Cadiz; the Caraccas is what Woolwich is in England: every exertion is making to be ready for sea as soon as possible. During my stay at Cadiz two English sail of the line were cruising off the Bay, but the Spaniards thinking it was only a decoy, did not go out to face them. On my arrival at Faro (in Portugal), I met these two sail of the line, which proved to be the *Superb* (74), Captain Keats, and the *Venerable*, Capt. Hood, which had convoyed the outward-bound East India fleet as far as St. Michael's, all well and safe. From the officers of these ships I was informed that the two French frigates, with the crews on board for the French fleet, had got safe into Cadiz; they were pursued for some hours by the two 74's, but without effect.

On the 8th of June, the French General Des Moulins arrived at Cadiz, to command a French and Spanish Army, which is to penetrate into Portugal by the Province of Algarve. General Des Moulins commanded under Masséna and Dessaix at Zurich and Marengo, and [it] was he who entered the Council at

St. Cloud, and had nearly been stabbed by the Deputy Arena.

Being the only passenger out of nine who obtained permission to travel through Spain into Portugal (all the others were sent to Gibraltar), I left Cadiz for this place, by the way of Algarve. At Agamonte, the frontier town opposite Portugal, there are at least 8000 Spaniards, and 5000 French are expected to join them and to be commanded by General Des Moulins. The town opposite on the Portugal side is Villa Real, incapable of resistance; a strong bombardment of these places took place a day before I arrived at Agamonte, but without much effect or loss on either side.

On my arrival here at Lisbon, I heard of Peace being signed between Spain, France, and Portugal.

Don Rodrigues de Souza, late Minister of the Marine, is now Prime Minister, vice Marquis de Limes, deceased. M. Rodrigues has been, and is still, decided for war, in which he is seconded by Luis Pinto, Secretary of State for the Home Department. However, when the Spanish Army had entered Alemtejo, carrying everything before them, the Portuguese, dispirited, without food, guns, shoes, and every means of subsistence, flying in all directions, and when the hostile army is at Abrantes, 18 leagues, the Ministry become alarmed, and one of them, Pinto, gets full power to repair to Badajoz.

The bases proposed by France and Spain are these :

To shut the ports against every kind of English shipping, and confiscate British property.

Agreed to.

Eight millions of crusades (a crusade is 2s. 6d.) to France, one half in specie, and the other half in jewels.

Agreed to.

To cede the province of Algava to Spain. *Refused :* and after warm discussions, it was *agreed* to cede to Spain the province of Olivenza.

The free navigation for the French to the North of Brazils from Cayenne.

Agreed to.

Twenty thousand Spanish and 10,000 French troops to garrison the towns in Portugal, and to be maintained by Portugal during the war. This was *refused*, on the ground that some months since France only proposed to draw cordons of French and Spanish troops on the Portuguese frontiers, and for Portugal to maintain them; and only in case that Portugal gives any succours to the English, the French troops should garrison the Portuguese towns.

The Portuguese negociator does not know what could have changed the resolutions of the French Cabinet, and as L. Bonaparte did not know this, and thought what M. Pinto suggested was very fair, Peace was signed on the 7th of June on the part of France, Spain, and Portugal. It has already been ratified by the two latter Powers, but it is generally believed that the French Government will not ratify the treaty, unless Portugal admits French and Spanish troops in her garrisons.

Last night a courier brought the intelligence to Court that the French Army, 24,000 strong, under the command of General St. Cyr, had entered Portugal from Salamanca, and had invested the fortress of Almeida, which is in the N.E. of Portugal, and lies between Porto and Lisbon, and about 30 leagues from the latter place. There is no Portuguese Army whatever to oppose St. Cyr, as the main army, under the command of the Duc D'Alfoens, is opposed to the Spanish Army at Abrantes, and the Portuguese Army on the frontiers of Galicia, under the command of the Marquis de la Rozière, a French Emigrant, is opposed to the Spanish Army under the command of the Count de St. Simeon: therefore the road to Lisbon is open for St. Cyr's army. By this movement of the French Army, it appears that orders were sent direct to St. Cyr from Paris, but no news of the Ratification of the Peace from Paris can be known by the way of Badajoz, where the Negotiators still are, till the 4th of next month.

On the 9th of this month the news arrived here of the Peace being signed. Don Rodrigues communicated

it to the Corps Diplomatique: he was questioned as to the terms, and his reply was 'He did not know.' This produced a Note from Mr. Frere to the Portuguese Minister, remonstrating against the conclusion of Peace till England was consulted.

Immediately after Mr. Frere had presented his Note, he wrote to Mr. Arbuthnot, the English Consul-General here, desiring him to intimate to the British Merchants residing in Portugal 'That in consequence of Peace being made between Spain, France, and Portugal, and in all probability prejudicial to the interests of Great Britain and of Englishmen resident in this Country, policy required that all British subjects should hold themselves ready to depart at a moment's notice.' This letter was communicated by an English Merchant of this city, and was handed about on 'Change. It produced a great sensation here in the public mind, in consequence of which Don Rodrigues waited on Mr. Frere, expostulating with him on the impropriety of such a letter, especially as the Prince Regent had so repeatedly assured the British Merchants of his protection.

It was then agreed on by the Ministers that the following Letter should be posted on 'Change:

Copy of a Letter addressed to all British Subjects residing in Portugal, by the British Consul, dated Lisbon, June 14th.

'Whereas, it is presumed that one of the Articles of the Peace concluded between France, Spain, and Portugal is to shut the ports of Portugal against the British, I have nevertheless the satisfaction to inform you, that the Prince Regent has solemnly assured, and gives you his protection for all the property you may have here; and he wishes and desires this to be made known to all British Subjects residing in Portugal.'

The British families are hastening to depart: 30 passengers by this Packet: and as there are a great number of Danish and Swedish ships here which will now sail from hence, a great many families will go with

them. The English ships will sail on the 7th of July, under convoy of a frigate now here.

Sir J. Saumarez is here with six sail of the line going to Cadiz.

L. Bonaparte and General Le Clerc, his brother-in-law, will come here when the peace is ratified.

This letter provides a survey of the condition of affairs in Portugal at the moment of Saumarez' arrival. He himself with the squadron proceeded off Cadiz, where on the 5th July he received news that Linois and the Toulon ships had anchored the day before off Algeciras. On the 3rd, off Malaga, they had captured the Speedy (Captain Lord Cochrane), 'that was a Mahon packet and was conducting to Gibraltar a prize, the merchant brig the Union, loaded with oil and provisions.' This is according to the Spanish account quoted in Ross's 'Life of Saumarez'; Cochrane's account is somewhat different and will be found in 'The Autobiography of a Seaman': he had the experience of being present at the action of Algeciras as a prisoner of war on board the Dessaix.

* * * * *

Sir John Ross, in his 'Memoirs and Correspondence of Admiral Lord De Saumarez,' has narrated the details of the action of 6th and the night action of 12th-13th July. On the 6th July the Hannibal (Captain Ferris) got aground and had to be abandoned to the French, Ferris and her officers arriving at Gibraltar on parole on 8th July, at the same time as Cochrane and the officers of the Speedy.

On the 9th Saumarez was refitting at Gibraltar, and the Superb and the Thames came in from Cadiz, a Spanish squadron of six ships of the line closely following them. The Spaniards anchored

in Algeciras, and it was the intention of Don Juan Joaquin de Moreno, the Spanish Admiral in command, to escort Linois into Cadiz. On the 10th the *San Antonio*, flying the flag of Rear-Admiral Dumanoir and manned by a mixed Franco-Spanish crew, also joined; and on the 12th the squadron sailed.

From Gibraltar every movement was visible, and it was seen that the *Hannibal*, after an ineffectual effort to work out of the Bay, returned to anchor. The remainder of the squadron proceeded to make for Cadiz, and it was during the night that Captain Keats in the *Superb* cut into the squadron, creating the confusion in which two Spanish first-rates of 112 guns fired into one another, setting each other on fire and blowing up; the *Superb*, meanwhile, had passed on and captured the *San Antonio* (Commodore Julien Le Raye). The remainder of the squadron reached Cadiz in safety.

The dispatches of the action Saumarez sent home by Lieutenant Dumaresq of the *Cæsar*, a near relation, and he landed at Falmouth on the 30th July.

When Dumaresq waited on Lord St. Vincent [wrote Saumarez' sister-in-law], His Lordship squeezed his hand in the greatest rapture, exclaiming, 'I knew it! I knew it! I knew the man! I knew what he could do! It is the most daring thing that has been done this war. It is the first thing. I knew it would be so!' He then gave Dumaresq his commission, and wrote a letter of congratulation to Lady Saumarez, which he charged Phil. Dumaresq to deliver with his own hand. . . . Lord St. Vincent also sent Dumaresq to Mr. Addington, who received him in the most gracious manner. He told Phil. everything that man could say in terms of approbation; and justly added that, however the multitude

might estimate and admire the last action, yet the first, in his own mind, and in the minds of men who understood the matter, was equally deserving of praise, and would have fixed their approbation of Sir James's conduct, even though he had failed in his second attempt. At the same time he owned, that the exertions made by the men after the first action, in order to meet the second, were beyond conception or example. . . .

The news of an action having taken place on 6th July had reached London, via Paris, a week earlier than Saumarez' letters. The French Journals of the 19th July contained an account of the action and the capture of H.M.S. Hannibal ; a *communiqué* signed by the Minister of Marine had been read in all the theatres of Paris overnight, and the details were copied by our Press on the 23rd July.

It was in consequence of these accounts that St. Vincent submitted to the Prime Minister, on 27th July, his suggestion that a strong detachment from the Baltic Fleet, then returning, under Vice-Admiral Pole, should be ordered to reinforce Saumarez off Cadiz. It had presumably been approved to do this before news of the second action reached England. Pole and the Baltic ships reached Spithead, via the Downs, on Sunday, 9th August ; and on the 19th he sailed from Portsmouth in the St. George (98), First Captain Henry Nicholls, Second Captain T. M. Hardy ; together with the Dreadnought (98), Captain Vashon ; Vanguard (74), Captain Sir T. Williams ; Zealous (74), Captain S. H. Linzee ; Ramillies (74), Captain S. Osborne ; and Powerful (74), Captain Sir F. Laforey.

Saumarez had already been reinforced by the arrival of the Baltic detachment under Commodore Charles Tyler in the Warrior ; Tyler had sailed

northabout and reported to Gardner at Cork, where he received Admiralty orders to proceed off Cadiz. On 31st August Pole himself arrived and took over the command from Saumarez.

The force watching the French and Spanish squadrons in Cadiz was now of such strength that no movement was to be feared from that quarter. Admiral Truguet was reported as arriving from France and assuming command of the Combined Fleets ; but the fears of the Portuguese that the squadron might act against Lisbon, or their Colonies, were now dissipated. Meanwhile, an expeditionary force had sailed from England at the end of June, consisting of the *Argo* (44), Captain James Bowen, with the *Carysfort* and *Falcon*, conveying the 85th Regiment, commanded by Colonel (afterwards General Sir) William Henry Clinton. The force took possession of Madeira on 23rd July, and Clinton held the island, as Governor, until peace should enable it to be restored to Portugal.

* * * * *

The campaign in Portugal and the negotiations at Badajoz had been proceeding in the meantime.

On 14th May the Prince of Peace, Generalissimo of the Armies of the Spanish King, issued his Proclamation at Badajoz :

Behold me ready, brave Spaniards, to lead you to victory. An obstinate but feeble people is the obstacle of the common good. The French troops, victorious in every part of the world, are united with us. We are joined by a strict alliance, and our operations will prove so many victories. Let us give to our friends the French that reception which we would look for in similar circumstances, and behave to them as brothers. I shall always lie at your head, and partake of your

dangers. Rely upon my care to supply your wants and those of your families. I promise you a reward adequate to your labours. Let us march to conquer a Peace which our just Sovereign desires. It is necessary to the happiness of his kingdom ; for without it, he cannot gratify us with the repose which we are promised by a new Military Constitution.

The Portuguese were not in a condition to offer any serious resistance to the Spanish advance, and on 26th May Lucien Bonaparte was able to report :

We shall be to-morrow at Badajoz. Pinto, the Portuguese Minister for Foreign Affairs, is upon the frontiers : he solicits a suspension of arms. The Prince of Peace has taken the places of Olivenza and Monte Major. His presence inspires confidence with his soldiers ; and he will not stop his victorious progress till Pinto has admitted, as the preliminary basis of Peace, that the ports of Portugal shall be shut against the English.

The first Portuguese overtures were therefore rejected, but, upon the Portuguese Minister obtaining full powers to consent to these terms, the negotiations were reopened and the preliminaries of peace signed at Badajoz on 6th June. The Prince of Peace signed on behalf of Spain, and the King of Spain duly ratified the treaty. Lucien Bonaparte signed for France, and the treaty was forwarded to Paris for ratification.

Meanwhile, however, General St. Cyr's army from Bayonne was rapidly advancing into Portuguese territory, apparently under direct orders from Paris and contrary to the suspension of hostilities agreed upon at Badajoz.

The fact was that the First Consul was at this moment using the Portuguese negotiations as auxiliary to his negotiations for peace with

England. To obtain active co-operation from Spain, he had included the restoration of Trinidad to Spain amongst the French demands in the peace discussions; and the Badajoz treaty was now laid before the English negotiators. 'A Treaty is negotiating at this moment at Badajoz,' wrote the First Consul in the letter already quoted. '. . . Spain appears rather disposed to consent to this concession. But everything depends on the First Consul. He can assent to or negative this treaty: he is about to reject it; and he is about to take possession of the chief provinces of Portugal, unless England consents to peace, and upon reasonable and moderate terms.'

In reply to this declaration, Hawkesbury stated the British intention of occupying the Portuguese Colonies, as pledges for the territory of Portugal occupied by France.

Everything now suddenly went against the First Consul. The treaty reached the First Consul for ratification at a most unfortunate moment: Bonaparte had just committed France to a vigorous offensive against Portugal. Extraordinary couriers were rushed off to Badajoz, to declare that France refused ratification, and Lucien Bonaparte resigned.

The First Consul, however, had overrated his ability to drive his Spanish allies. The Prince of Peace, in reply, declared that all hostilities were at an end against Portugal, and that the passage of French troops would be held to be a violation of Spanish territory. 'This very imprudent declaration,' Thiers terms it; 'language which was both idle and ridiculous.' However, the Spanish reply, in continuation, demanded the return of the Spanish fleet shut up in Brest, and a speedy conclusion of a general peace, 'in order

to bring to a termination, as soon as possible, an alliance which had become irksome to the Court of Madrid.'

A crisis had been reached, and the Franco-Spanish alliance was in danger of collapsing. On 10th July 1801 the reply of the First Consul was made to Madrid. Bonaparte stated :

That I have read the Note of General the Prince of Peace : that it is so ridiculous that it does not merit a serious reply : but that if this Prince, bought over by England, should induce the King and Queen to take measures at variance with the honour and the interests of the Republic, the knell of the Spanish monarchy is rung.

That my intention is, to keep the French troops in Spain until peace is made between the Republic and Portugal.

That the slightest movement of the Spanish troops, with an intention of advancing nearer to the French forces, will be considered as a declaration of war.

That, at the same time, I am disposed to do everything in my power to reconcile the interests of the Republic with the conduct and inclinations of His Catholic Majesty. . . .

. . . That affairs of state can be carried on without giving way to excitement, and that, moreover, my desire to do something agreeable to the House of Spain would be badly requited, if the King allowed the corrupting bribes of England, at a moment when we are in sight of harbour, after so many anxieties and troubles, to disunite our two great Nations ; that the consequences must be fatal and terrible.

That at this very moment, less precipitation in making peace with Portugal would have contributed greatly to accelerate peace with England. . . .¹

The First Consul also ordered his brother Lucien back to Madrid. Further, D'Arranjo, who

¹ Thiers, ii. 96.

had been refused permission to proceed to Paris to negotiate peace and had been ordered to remain at L'Orient, now returned to Lisbon after a fruitless mission.

It was at this moment that the actions of Algeciras were fought. The effect on the international situation was far-reaching. No longer could the First Consul hope to get together a Mediterranean fleet to relieve Egypt; time had all along pressed, but it became now impracticable to fit a fleet out before Alexandria should capitulate. To get a squadron out from Cadiz was now no longer possible. The end, to which the Portuguese campaign was to be the means, had become unattainable.

On 20th July the Prince Regent of Portugal announced by Proclamation the restoration of peace with Spain; and on 15th August it was announced at Madrid that Lucien Bonaparte and M. Freire as Ministers Plenipotentiary had received authority to negotiate a Franco-Portuguese treaty of peace. In the statement on the peace treaties made in the French Chamber on 30th November 1801, an explanation was given of the French proceedings after the Spanish ratifications:

We continued several months alone at war with Portugal. We should have undertaken and realised what by the Convention of Madrid Spain was to have done in concert with us. We should have obtained the cession, until the definitive peace, of the occupation of a quarter of the Portuguese territory; but events were pressing. The negotiations, so long carried on at London, arrived at their maturity. Government gave its orders, and the Peace was signed with Portugal two days before the signing of the preliminaries at London.

The peace was signed at Madrid on 29th September 1801.

On 2nd December Sir Charles Pole arrived at Portsmouth from Cadiz, in the *Ramillies*, one day after Sir John Warren; and on 5th December both Admirals struck their flags. Saumarez remained on until the following July, and was offered by St. Vincent the Mediterranean command during peace, which, however, he did not feel himself able to accept.

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II. LETTERS

CALDER AND GANTEAUME

Admiral Cornwallis

7 March, 1801.

. . . The French Papers state authentically that Ganteaume was off Cape de Gatte on the 13th February and has captured the *Success*, *Incendiary*, and *Sprightly*, cutter. We do not yet know whether Sir Robert Calder got scent of his route while our Squadron was on the coast of Portugal.

Sir Edward Pellew, Bt.

25 February, 1801.

. . . Put your heart at ease about the escape of Ganteaume's Squadron, and be assured no man regards and esteems you more truly than [I].

Duke of Northumberland

15 March, 1801.

A thousand thanks for your obliging communication touching the Brazils. A prepossession in favour of that idea in narrow Lisbon politics has

already done us irreparable injury, and Lucien Bonaparte has shown much address in imposing false intelligence on the Government of Portugal.

Rt. Hon. William Windham

16 March, 1801.

The infatuation under which all our engines, civil and military, at Lisbon have acted touching the destination of Ganteaume's Squadron is incomprehensible, for after receiving the best possible evidence of its being actually seen between Tetuan Bay and Marabella, they determined that it was gone to the southward; nor does it appear that any advice boat was sent after Sir Robert Calder to Madeira or Teneriffe after more positive intelligence was received of the enemy being seen off Cartagena.

Sir Robert Calder, Bt.

4 June, 1801.

The energy and precision with which you pursued the wrong scent Mr. Frere put you on never will be exceeded. I am happy to learn that your health has not materially suffered. The Prince of Wales cannot be spared, but there can be no objection to your having a respite.

Calder ¹

22 June, 1801.

. . . The Confederacy in the North has taken from us so large a part of our home defence that we anxiously wished none of your Squadron should be put into a state of refitment, which was the cause of ordering the Prince of Wales to the westward the moment we heard of her arrival at Spithead.

¹ See further letter to Lady Calder, 17th August 1801, under 'Channel Fleet.'

CADIZ STATION

His Excellency General O'Hara

25 April, 1801.

. . . Captain Dunn¹ is indeed an officer of uncommon merit, and I verily believe was instrumental in causing Ganteaume to disobey his orders. . . .

I rejoice in the good account Captain Dunn gives of your health and that your motley garrison is in such good order. That everything may be propitious to your happiness is [my] fervent wish. . . .

General Sir Charles Grey

9 May, 1801.

. . . We also learn from Sir J. Warren that he got sight of Ganteaume's Squadron on the 26th March, between the Island of Sardinia and the coast of Barbary, and chased him the whole day with a fair prospect of bringing him to action, but the night following having proved dark and squally, they contrived to give him the slip and were seen going into Toulon (some of them much disabled, one in particular with a jury foremast) on the 4th April. Happily the squadron under Sir J. Warren suffered very little. Moreover, the French had suffered severely by a contagious fever before they sailed from Toulon, having buried above 2000 men—this we have the best information upon, from the Lieutenant who conducted the prisoners taken in the *Africaine* from Mahon to Toulon, and it accounts for the long detention of Ganteaume in that port. Upon the whole, this

¹ Commander Richard Dalling Dunn, Captain of the *Incendiary*, captured by Ganteaume's Squadron.

is a very pleasant history, for had the French squadron on entering the Mediterranean proceeded directly to Alexandria according to its orders, Lord Keith would have been beaten in detail, the French army effectually supplied with men and means, and our efforts completely baffled.

Duke of Portland

22 May, 1801.

I am infinitely obliged to you for the communication of the extract from Lord Wm. Bentinck's letter. We know that Sir J. Warren was in chase of Ganteaume's Squadron on the 26th March, between the Island of Sardinia and the coast of Africa, and that Sir John, after losing sight of the enemy in the night, steered for Cape Bona; and we have accounts from the Mutine sloop of war, commanded by an intelligent officer, Captain Hoste, that he saw the French squadron going into Toulon in a crippled state on the 4th April, and I think it probable that the report Lord William heard originated in the foregoing event, it being barely possible that the enemy could have sailed a second time and had an action with our Squadron, so as for the relation of it being made at Venice on the 26th April.

Rear-Adm. Sir Jas. Saumarez, Bt. 15 June, 1801.

The Portuguese squadron is in possession of the day and night signals, but I see many and strong objections to supplying any ship of that ally with the private signals; it will therefore be necessary to establish a distinct set of signals for knowing each other after separation, should you be joined by any auxiliary force from Lisbon. Heartily wishing you all manner of prosperity . . .

O'Hara

21 June, 1801.

I am extremely concerned to learn by your kind letter of the 30th April that your health is impaired, but I heartily hope you recovered it before the heats set in, which I know from experience operate very powerfully against regaining strength and spirits.

The interruption the Transports and Victuallers bound to your Garrison have lately met with in their passage through the Gut is vexatious. I fear some of them have been insured above their real value, and that the commanders have not paid the attention they otherwise would have done to their Instructions. We have continual complaints upon this head, but find it very difficult to produce proofs: consequently are not able to punish; in truth, no jury will convict unless the proofs are substantiated in a manner that it is next to impossible to effect. . . .

I know Captain Donkin to be a persevering and useful man in the Portuguese Service, yet it would be the height of injustice to promote him in ours, to the prejudice of those who have served well during this trying war; every attention which can be shown to him, consistently with what is due to them, he will be sure of. . . .

. . . Sir James Saumarez will, I trust, be able to counteract whatever plan of operations may be in contemplation at Cadiz, and give protection and confidence to vessels carrying supplies to Gibraltar, which will be very materially affected by the Marine Provinces of Portugal being in the hands of the enemy. You have, I conclude, a plentiful supply of provisions, but report says you are hard run for water, which I fear will be an increasing evil, unless some contrivance can be

made to prevent the water which falls upon the Rock running over your Parade into the Bay, for sure I am the Red Sand is the deposit of that element; and every inch of it dedicated to Parades, Roads, &c., contributes to the decrease of your supply of water. . . . With most hearty wishes for the re-establishment of your health, and for a long enjoyment of it and every other blessing. . . .

Captain Morris, H.M.S. Phaeton

12 July, 1801.

Many thanks for your interesting letter of the 30th. In the distracted state the Court of Portugal is, I do not wonder at the diversified accounts you receive of the order of things, and while the Duke de la Foens continues at the head of the Army, no energy can be expected; and in truth, unprovided, as it appears to be, with every means of taking the field, I do not see how it can be subsisted at any distance from the Capital. We have not heard of Magazines being prepared, to support the Armies of France and Spain; should this be the case the only hope the Portuguese have, is that they will not be able to carry on Operations during the two next months. You will, of course, pay a vigilant attention to what is going on, and do your best, and I feel confident that your temper and judgment will operate powerfully to prevent any injury being done to H.M. Service by the want of these qualities in others.

Lord Keith

12 July, 1801.

. . . Great efforts have been made to replace the Squadron which, on the arrival of Ganteaume

in the Mediterranean, had very judiciously followed him, and Sir J. Saumarez is now before Cadiz with seven ships of the line, one frigate, and such small craft as could be spared from the various services occasioned by the Northern Confederacy. . . .

Mr. Addington

Monday morning, 27 July, 1801.

By the accounts in the French newspapers, the ships under the orders of Sir James Saumarez have suffered to such a degree that I am very apprehensive we have not means at Gibraltar to put them into an efficient state. I therefore submit to you, whether it would not be expedient to detach Vice-Admiral Pole, with ten or twelve ships of the line, the moment they can be got ready, which I hope will be in a few days after his arrival at Spithead, and I send you herewith a rough sketch of our force to enable you and Lord Hawkesbury to form a judgment upon this measure. Should it be approved, we will send a Messenger to Ireland immediately, to countermand the detachment ordered to be made from thence. The further diminution of our force in the Mediterranean by the loss of the *Swiftsure*, stated in the *Journal des Défenseurs de la Patrie* of the 23rd, renders a strong reinforcement the more necessary.

Admiral Cornwallis

29 July, 1801.

. . . By every intelligence we receive, Egypt is the object nearest the First Consul's heart; and we are told that the Squadron in Brest is bound thither, if it eludes your vigilance. . . .

Lady Saumarez

3 August, 1801.

I beg leave to congratulate your Ladyship upon the very great additional lustre which His Majesty's Arms have derived from the intrepid conduct of Sir James Saumarez and the gallant officers and men under his orders, and I do not lose a moment in sending the harbinger of this glorious event to recount the particulars of it to your Ladyship.

Lord Grey

4 August, 1801.

. . . This last enterprise of Sir James Saumarez has placed us on velvet—the affair of the 6th of July, although highly honourable to His Majesty's Arms, having occasioned a considerable degree of anxiety in the minds of all the members of this Board, lest the magazines at Gibraltar should not be equal to the means to refit the ships, which had suffered so materially in their masts, yards, sails and cordage.

Rear-Adm. Sir Jas. Saumarez, Bt. 5 August, 1801.

I have to acknowledge your letters of the 30th June, 5th, 6th, 7th, 10th and 13th July, and to congratulate you most heartily on the career of Glory you and your gallant Squadron have run in the course of those periods: the hardy enterprise of the 6th merited complete success, but all who know the baffling winds in the Bay of Gibraltar can readily account for the event of it. The astonishing effort made to refit the crippled ships in Gibraltar Mole surpasses everything of the kind within my experience, and the final success in making so great an impression on

the very superior force of the Enemy crowns the whole : and I have great satisfaction in reporting to you that I have received the most gracious and full approbation of His Majesty this morning of your whole conduct, and of that of every officer and man under your command, and I hear nothing but praise and admiration from every quarter.

We wait impatiently the arrival of Vice-Admiral Pole from the Baltic, to detach a powerful reinforcement to you, and we are not without hope that four ships of the line are on their passage from Cork to join you before Cadiz or at Gibraltar.

Having from the moment of your departure felt the most perfect confidence that everything would be performed for the honour and success of His Majesty's Arms within the reach of human power, I have only to add my anxious wish that another opportunity will present ere long for a further display of the talents and intrepidity which the Country has upon so many occasions received important benefit from. . . .

Lord Nelson

7 August, 1801.

. . . We have great hopes that the four ships of the line, which sailed from Cork on the 30th ult. to join Sir James Saumarez, will have a good passage : and the moment Vice-Admiral Pole arrives we shall make another detachment.

Vice-Admiral Pole

8 August, 1801.

Secret. I wish to be informed by return of post whether you would prefer resuming your command at Newfoundland, or to be employed for a short time between Cadiz and Gibraltar,

where we shall soon dispatch a strong reinforcement. The service will be temporary ; for the moment Lord Keith comes down the Mediterranean, it will be proper to bring you to England. I will thank you not to mention this to anyone.

Nelson

11 August, 1801.

. . . The moment Lord Keith signifies his intention of retiring from his command, you shall be apprised of it : in the meanwhile we are about to strengthen the Squadron before Cadiz, and Vice-Admiral Pole will sail with six ships of the line as soon as they can be got ready for that purpose, understanding that he must return to England the instant Lord Keith comes down the Mediterranean—this *entre nous*. Our negotiation is drawing near its close and must terminate one way or another in the course of a few days, and I need not add how very important it is that the Enemy should know you are constantly opposed to him. . . .

Lord Keith

13 August, 1801.

The efforts making by the Enemy at Cadiz, and the constant Intelligence we receive of his intention to strike a blow from thence, require a considerable reinforcement to the Squadron employed before that port, and a degree of attention and responsibility which cannot be laid on your shoulders while the war in Egypt continues. Vice-Admiral Pole is therefore ordered to take upon him the important charge, which he will be directed to resign into your Lordship's hands when you come down the Mediterranean ; or, should he find it expedient to join your

Lordship, to put himself under your command. I rejoice to learn that your health does not suffer by the fatigue you undergo. . . .

Saumarez

13 August, 1801.

Many thanks for your letter of the 18th July. The unceasing exertions made by you and the officers under your orders are the theme of universal admiration, and it is with infinite regret that we find ourselves compelled by the size of the reinforcement sent to you to employ another Flag Officer, and to separate the Command from that of Lord Keith while the war in Egypt continues : and we lament most exceedingly your place on the list of Admirals would not justify our fixing you in the chief command : knowing as I do your zeal and honourable feelings, I persuade myself you will see the propriety of this measure in the way it strikes us, and that we could not have employed a man more acceptable to you than Vice-Admiral Pole.

Countess Malmesbury

20 August, 1801.

All the officers attached to Lord Nelson, with the exception of Captain Hardy, were continued in the *St. George*, to be in the way of His Lordship on a future occasion, which I am not at liberty to communicate, and Vice-Admiral Pole in that ship, with several others, sailed yesterday from Spithead, so that I have not in my power to obey Your Ladyship's commands on the subject of Mr. Elliot. When Lord Minto arrives I shall have an opportunity to explain this matter to him, and can at any time bring his son to England, should His Lordship think it advisable.

Saumarez

5 September, 1801.

Many thanks for your letters by the Spider : the vigorous efforts made to refit the disabled ships of your Squadron mark strongly your own character and that of the captains under your Orders. I am very happy to inform you that the King has, upon the suggestion of Mr. Addington, conferred on you the extra Knight-hood of the Bath occasioned by General Trigge succeeding to the Stall of Sir George Warren a few days ago, and it is due to Mr. Addington to assure you that the title of Baronet was obtained through him without the interposition of any other person save your very sincere and obedient Servant. . . . I am very happy to learn that the stores at Gibraltar furnished the means of equipping all your Squadron, of which we were very doubtful. Your approbation of the conduct of Dr. Weir in the care of the wounded men is highly gratifying, and I rejoice to learn that the officers and artificers at Gibraltar Yard maintain the character they held when I had the Command.

Saumarez

14 September, 1801.

Many thanks for your letters . . . enclosing copies of the correspondence which passed between you and Don Josef de Mazarredo, which is very satisfactory indeed, for the French had certainly made an impression on the minds of the ignorant throughout Europe by basely and falsely asserting that we made use of hot shot afloat, a measure which in no instance has been resorted to by us, although they had in vain attempted it in the American War.

The Spanish officer who came with the Flag

of Truce gave Captain Brenton very correct information, which is confirmed from a variety of quarters, and we have every reason to believe that the Court of Spain is under the greatest anxiety.

I cannot account for the silence of Mr. Frere, who conveyed in his correspondence with the Foreign Office an intention of holding constant communication with you : it is probable some of his letters may have miscarried.

The reports from Lisbon of the sailing of the Enemy's Fleet from Brest have certainly been invented by French emissaries in hopes of distracting you—a proof of how little they really know of your character. Remember me kindly to Captain Brenton and all your worthies.

Saumarez

2 October, 1801.

I cannot sufficiently express my surprise at the contents of your public and private letters upon the subject of Vice-Admiral Pole being sent out with the reinforcement, the more so as you were before in a much more subordinate situation than that you are now placed in, being removed from fourth in command to second, and I persuade myself that you will, long before this can reach you, have seen the great impropriety of your public letter.

In respect to the appointments you have found it necessary to make, reference must be had to Lord Keith, who as your late Commander-in-Chief cannot be passed over. . . .

Mr. Addington

2 November, 1801.

. . . What shall I say upon Sir James Saumarez his expectations, which are worked up to a pitch beyond all comparison ? . . .

Captain Crawford Duncan

2 November, 1801.

You surely must be aware that in the present state of the politics of Portugal it is impossible for that Court, whatever opinion it may entertain of your services,¹ to bestow any reward on you for exertions against the Spanish Squadron.

John Darby, Esq.

3 February, 1802.

I am extremely concerned to learn the cause of your trip to Ireland, but heartily hope it will please God to spare your brother.

I do not recollect having ever heard a remark made upon Sir Jas. Saumarez's Letter, but I am persuaded our friend the Captain of the *Spencer* must have felt some injustice to that ship or he would not, even to you his beloved brother, have stated what you have been so obliging to communicate. He is, I find, detached to the West Indies with a squadron under his orders, which I trust he will consider as a mark of confidence, for Sir James Saumarez would not have so placed him without it; therefore pray do all you can to keep his mind at ease.

Mrs. Pigot

25 March, 1802.

Very many thanks for your obliging letter of the 23rd, which gives me the pleasure of knowing that you have received so much benefit from your native air. You do me justice in believing that the death of our excellent friend General O'Hara²

¹ Duncan was in the Portuguese Navy. For his services to Saumarez, see Ross's *Life of Saumarez*, i. 416, and ii. 14.

² O'Hara's death was announced in *The Times*, 22nd March 1802, having taken place on 21st February, 'after an illness of

has given me a severe shock, and the only consolation I feel under it is, that he was suffering under an incurable disorder when it pleased God to remove him from us.

There is a report that the Duke of Kent is to have an appointment at Gibraltar which will not subject him to residence, and that General Fox will be his locum tenens. How this is to be managed I know not, nor indeed have I any authority which can be relied on for the report. You may rest assured that I never will lose an opportunity to serve your General, to whom pray say everything friendly on my part, and with Lady St. Vincent's best compliments to you, believe me to be, etc.

Saumarez

30 April, 1802.

Understanding from Sir Thomas Troubridge that you are very desirous to come to England after the service you are charged with is performed, orders are gone out accordingly.

I wish however to know as soon as possible whether the Command in the Mediterranean during Peace would be agreeable to you. I

six months, during which he suffered the most excruciating tortures from his wounds breaking out afresh, and a dreadful stranguary which followed.'

Sir Thomas Trigge, Lieutenant-Governor of Gibraltar, was in the West Indies; his return, and the probability of General Fox succeeding O'Hara on the evacuation of Minorca under the Definitive Treaty, had been discussed in *The Times*, 7th January, 1802.

The Duke of Kent actually succeeded; Trigge continuing as Lieutenant-Governor. General [Sir Henry] Pigot had received the surrender of Malta, and returned to England in December 1801.

therefore will thank you for a short line on the subject by the first conveyance after the receipt of this.

Mr. Addington

6 August, 1802.

Sir James Saumarez in a conversation I had with him yesterday, amongst other grievances, stated his disappointment at not having a pension given him to support the titles conferred upon him for his services during the late War, which his circumstances required, and I understood him to say that £1000 a year was what he hoped would not be considered too much. I replied to him by observing how very kind you had been in giving a very lucrative employment to his Brother and how extremely well disposed you had shown yourself to do justice to his merits, and that I would make known to you the situation he described himself to be in.

EGYPT

Lord Keith

20 February, 1801.

I have read the Orders of the 2nd and 27th December, under which you are acting, and solicitous as I am not to make any alteration in the system of my Predecessor, where it can be avoided without injury to the Public Service, you will receive no additional Instructions upon the objects of those Orders, unless a change of circumstances should render it necessary.

Mr. Addington

9 April, 1801.

Lord St. Vincent's mind has not been at ease since his conversation with Lord Hawkes-

bury yesterday, and he takes the liberty to enclose his reflections upon it.

Malta in our hands can annoy no Power in Europe that has not views on the Turkish Empire. It would be extremely impolitic to leave it in the hands of the Knights with the fortifications demolished: for the whole island being composed of soft rock, like Minorca, which hardens when exposed to the air, works would be thrown up with great facility and dispatch; and while France is in possession of the coast of the Ocean from the Rhine to the Adriatic, and Russia can, with so much ease, occupy the whole of Greece, we may soon expect to see a partition of the Turkish Empire—Austria being compensated by the Provinces which border on Hungary. And our possession of Malta seems the only check to these ambitious projects.

The first plan of France in Egypt will be colonization in the Delta; where, their writers assert, all the produce of the West India Colonies may be raised to the greatest advantage; after establishing themselves in security, they will annihilate the Beys, and extend their pursuits towards Persia, and even Abyssinia, and will doubtless obtain much of the commerce of the former, their manufactures being better suited to the Persian market than ours.

General Sir Charles Grey

20 April, 1801.

. . . Sir R. Abercromby having got his army ashore at Aboukir is another great object. I think the French have accounts from that quarter less favourable than those they have published. As far as I can judge from the *Moniteur*, they are preparing the public mind

for the evacuation of Egypt. Should their troops show a disposition to get to France, the game is up.

General O'Hara

25 April, 1801.

. . . Lord Keith and Sir R. Abercromby no doubt had good reasons for going into Marmorissa Bay and lying there for such a length of time. Certain it is that they lost incalculable advantages by the delay, which however may be recovered if the soldiers and seamen are united; otherwise it is a hopeless business. . . .

Grey

9 May, 1801.

. . . We have accounts from Lord Keith down to the 18th March by the *Louisa*, armed brig, but the Public is very much disappointed, everyone having laid his account to hearing particulars of the battle of the 21st: it is, however, a satisfaction to know that the army was well supplied with sheep, poultry, and other refreshments by the Arabs, at a cheap rate, and that there was no want of water. There has been a revolt at Cairo, to which place the Grand Vizier was marching. The Capitaine Bey, precursor of the Capitaine Pasha, joined Lord Keith with a squadron of Turkish ships of war and gun boats on the 18th, and he had been previously joined by *La Pique*, with the victuallers from England, and by the armed transports with troops from Lisbon. . . .

Grey

16 May, 1801.

George wrote you all I knew about Egypt yesterday, and the *Gazette* came out too late

to send it by last night's post : it contains everything that has come to my knowledge, and as you will have it in the newspapers, and are a better judge of the relation than I am, I will not make a single comment.

Captain Hope, H.M.S. Leda

20 May, 1801.

Many thanks for the kind reception you have given to Mr. Parker. Lord J. Townshend will, I hope, join you to-morrow. . . . It was not intended that you should have had so much company to Alexandria, but the exigency of the moment has compelled us to send a strong reinforcement in six ships of war. . . .

Captain Ryves

25 May, 1801.

Before your final arrangements are made for the accommodation of the officers of the regiment ordered to embark on board the Agincourt, allow me to request of you to make room for Colonel Graham of the 90th Regiment, a particular friend of mine, and among the best officers and disinterested men in His Majesty's Service. It was his intention to have gone out in the Leda (Captain George Hope being his relation), but her sudden departure defeated it. Although a man of very large fortune, he has no difficulties and is never encumbered with baggage ; every attention you are so obliging to show him will be considered as a favour conferred on [me].

Keith

3 June, 1801.

Mr. Addington and Sir William Pulteney are very much interested in favour of Captain

Stewart of the Mondovi, who appears by his correspondence, which I have seen, to be a very manly, sensible fellow, and should he stand so in your opinion, I beg leave to recommend him to you for promotion.

Right Hon. Henry Dundas

13 June, 1801.

I thank you kindly for the perusal of Governor Duncan's letters, for the correspondence between the Marquis Wellesley and Sir Roger Curtis had put me quite out of spirits, not only as to the disappointment of an adequate force for the diversion in Upper Egypt, but the fear of the whole army in India being frittered away in enterprises which, with every degree of imaginable success, must be ruinous in their consequences.

O'Hara

21 June, 1801.

. . . We have sanguine hopes that the campaign in Egypt will ultimately turn out completely advantageous to His Majesty's Arms, but I am not one of the number who think it is already closed, being strongly of opinion that the French will maintain Alexandria as long as their water lasts, which I calculate will be to the month of October. . . .

Keith

12 July, 1801.

I am very happy to learn that your health does not suffer materially from the arduous service you are engaged in, to the happy termination of which we look with sanguine hope, as you will perceive by your Instructions. Great efforts have been made to replace the squadron, which, on the arrival of Ganteaume in the

Mediterranean, had very judiciously followed him, and Sir J. Saumarez is now before Cadiz with seven ships of the line, one frigate, and such small craft as could be spared from the various services occasioned by the Northern Confederacy ; and as the three ships of two decks, which are on their passage to you, are efficient, I trust you will be able to send the *Swiftsure*, and any other ship in the same crazy state, to England ; and Sir J. B. Warren, whose mind seems dreadfully shaken by the heavy calamity it has pleased God to afflict him with, may, if you can spare him, return in one of them, or in a frigate. Captain Cockburn of the *Minerve* has expressed a very earnest desire to come to England, and should his wish meet your approbation, she may be one of the two you send us in lieu of those which carried out the Guards, for we are put to very great inconvenience by detaching so many, and cannot possibly provide for the numerous increased demands upon us.

The moment the *Africaine* is placed on the Register of the Navy, which cannot by the standing Regulations be done until you send the necessary documents of her having been purchased and taken into the King's service, and she is approved, Captain Stephenson will be appointed to her, and Captain Stuart take post in his troop ship ; but I cannot possibly continue any of the Commanders you have appointed to act in Admiralty vacancies since I came to the Board (with the exception of Captain Langford), having no other means of promotion, and a Commander will, consequently, be named by the Admiralty to the *Woolwich* and to the two corvettes which have been purchased. With the sincerest wishes for your health and prosperity.

Rear-Admiral Sir J. B. Warren

12 July, 1801.

No one of your numerous friends feels more sensibly the heavy affliction it has pleased God to visit you with, and I lament most exceedingly that it is not in my power to accommodate you to the utmost extent of your wishes in authorizing Lord Keith to send you to England in the *Renown*. I have, however, written to him to furnish you with a frigate, if you should prefer that mode to coming in the *Swiftsure*, or any other ship of the line, the state of which may require her being sent to England. Heartily wishing you health and comfort in your affliction, be assured I always am, my dear Admiral, yours most truly.

Sir William Scott

13 July, 1801.

. . . Our news from the Baltic is very pleasant, and I trust will soon be followed by good accounts from Egypt. . . .

Cornwallis (Channel Fleet)

29 July, 1801.

. . . By every intelligence we receive, Egypt is the object nearest the First Consul's heart, and we are told that the squadron in Brest is bound thither, if it eludes your vigilance. Heartily wishing you a speedy meeting with it. . . .

Nelson

12 August, 1801.

. . . I have the pleasure to inform your Lordship that an account is this instant arrived of the capitulation of Cairo. The French have lost 2000 in killed and wounded and 6000 prisoners. It comes from the Agent of the East India Company, and our loss is not stated. . . .

Earl Thomond

24 August, 1801.

. . . I have much overloaded Lord Keith with recommendations. . . . Should his Lordship obtain possession of the enemy's ships in the Port of Alexandria, there may be an opening. . . .

Viscount Garlies

31 August, 1801.

. . . I have very strong ground to believe that the Convention Sir J. H. Hutchinson found it necessary to make was a wise measure, and as our reinforcement must have arrived at Aboukir soon after General Menou was in possession of it, he must have more than common influence over his garrison if he does not accept the terms which are provided for him in that Convention. The arrival of General Baird at Cossir, although a distant aid, will produce some effect.

The appointments at Malta were made by Lord Hobart: the removal of Ball was, I believe, a measure of Mr. Dundas's, on the suggestion of Sir Ralph Abercromby, who never liked the situation Ball held, probably feeling it a diminution of Army Patronage.

Keith

4 September, 1801.

I am favoured with your letters by Captain Young, and am extremely concerned to learn that there is any ill humour among the Captains under your command; it is the very error of the times and appears in all quarters, although what has happened with you was totally unknown to any of us here until your Packets were opened. We all disapprove of the mode in which the Captains addressed you; anything like

combination has a most dangerous tendency ; and the assembling of a Court Martial is too often made the scene of those improper proceedings. Sir William Parker and Sir J. Orde acted in like manner towards me before Cadiz. Most of the persons who were engaged in the late transactions, I am intimately acquainted with, and entertain the highest opinion of : Captain Wm. Hope, of whom all who know him speak in the highest terms of praise, is almost the only one I am unacquainted with. I therefore cannot conceive it possible that anything intentionally wrong was in the minds of any of them ; nevertheless Mr. Nepean will be directed to give you full satisfaction upon this head.

The subject of the shoes, which you express so much anxiety to have investigated, will be referred to the Navy Board.

The list of Post Captains and Commanders so far exceeds that of ships and sloops, I cannot, consistently with what is due to the public and to the incredible number of meritorious persons of those classes upon half pay, promote except upon very extraordinary occasions, such as that of Lord Cochrane and Captain Dundas, who have the rank of Post Captain ; nor can I confirm any of the appointments made by Commanders-in-Chief upon foreign stations, except the vacancies are occasioned by death or the sentences of Courts Martial ; and as your Squadron must be considerably reduced in strength of men by the very hard services in Egypt, it will be advisable not to commission any captured ship or vessel that is not very eligible. The crews of the Hannibal, Swiftsure, Success, Incendiary, Speedy, and cutters which have fallen into the hands of the enemy, would have amply completed

the complements of the ships serving in the Gulf of Alexandria, but for the application which has been made of them. So far from being able to furnish your Lordship with a seaman or marine, we have several ships of the line and numberless frigates, sloops and gun brigs ready for service without a man to put into them, and every ship in the Channel and North Sea fleets is considerably short of complement. We have so many points to guard here, and have furnished so many frigates, etc., to all the foreign stations, that we are put to our wits' end to provide for Convoys and guards to the extensive coasts of the United Kingdoms, and look towards the Mediterranean for resources whenever the campaign in Egypt terminates.

The expense of transports is immense, and your Lordship cannot be too prompt in sending all to England which are not essentially necessary to be kept, and with the number of armed transports belonging to the Crown, I hope in any event that most of the hired ones will soon appear. . . .

. . . I heartily hope your health will soon be re-established, when freed from such heavy responsibility. . . .

Keith

14 September, 1801.

I am favoured with your Lordship's letters of the 27th June, 4th, 5th and 7th July, and have greatly to lament that you have found cause to complain of improper treatment from your colleague, with whom I have not the honour to be acquainted, but I can hardly think it possible he has deliberately and intentionally meditated to slight an officer of your Lordship's rank, consideration and services; nevertheless

I have felt it my duty to recommend to the Board to lay your representation upon the subject before Lord Hobart, H.M. Principal Secretary of State for the War Department.

I heartily wish the reduction of Alexandria may be achieved before the winter sets in. Major Montresor, I understand, is not over-sanguine that it will, describing the garrison as very formidable. . . . The senior Sea Officer serving with the Army before Cairo having, in your Lordship's name and I conclude by your authority, approved the Convention, I do not see how you can be justified in not carrying it into execution, within your means, and I heartily hope that Sir J. Hutchinson has explained the cause of your not having received earlier intelligence of it. I learn from Lord Hobart that it was occasioned by Captain Currie being in a lighter boat than Major Montresor, and by that means made his passage down the Nile much quicker.

With every good wish for your health, honour, and prosperity.

Major-General Coote

14 September, 1801.

Many thanks for your obliging letter of the 30th June, by which I have the pleasure of learning that Captain Saville has merited your good opinion.

All your friends felt confident in your vigilance, on which our ultimate success so much depended, and I heartily hope ere this Alexandria is in the possession of our troops, although there are persons lately arrived from Egypt who express doubts upon the subject, and represent the garrison to be in much greater force and better supplied than we had any idea of.

I know Lord Grey has written many letters to you: some of them probably have miscarried by the capture of the vessels by which they were sent, others I have no doubt have turned up since the date of your letter. He has been unwell for some time, but I hear with great pleasure that he is better and intends being in town in the ensuing month. I could give you the strongest testimony of his constant regard and attention to your interests was I able to communicate several letters I have received upon the subject of them.

Lord Grey

25 September, 1801.

. . . Menou has rejected the Convention of Cairo as far as relates to Alexandria, and reprobates the conduct of Belliard. Advices from Lord Elgin received this morning state the garrison to be in great want of flour, wine, spirits and medicines, and that there is much discontent among the troops; nevertheless, Menou seems determined to hold out to the last. General Baird was expected to arrive at Geza the 6th of last month, and was directed to relieve a strong garrison left there by Sir J. Hutchinson. A hundred camels sent by Menou to collect provisions in Upper Egypt had been conducted by the Arabs in charge of them to our Army, The French garrison of Cairo were embarking at the date of the last letters from Lord Keith to Lord Elgin: all the reinforcements from Malta, England and Trieste had arrived in good health, so that we have every hope that the final event will be propitious, especially if the report of the deserters of the sickness of the garrison proves true. I understand from Prince William

of Gloster that the great object of our friend Coote is a Red Ribband, and I also learn from H.R.H. the General had received some encouragement from Mr. Dundas to expect it. When you are quite at ease I wish you would write me such a letter as I can show to Mr. Addington upon this or any other matter in which Coote is interested. If we do not obtain Peace we must wound the enemy wherever he is vulnerable, and there cannot be a fitter person for the purpose than Brigadier Maitland, but I have not heard of his being designed for any particular service.

General Smith

29 September, 1801.

. . . I never gave the smallest degree of credit to the newspaper reports of Sir Sidney Smith's intention to come to England before the business in Egypt should be finally settled. Besides 140 Admirals on the list, you know there are some Captains senior to him in the Mediterranean, so with the best disposition in the Admiralty and Lord Keith towards him, he could not serve in a higher rank than Captain of the Tigre. . . .

George Rose, Esq.

3 October, 1801.

It was with extreme concern I heard of the ill state of Lady Neale's health, and I do assure you I should have very great satisfaction in contributing to the conveyance of her ladyship to a milder climate; was it the case of a person most dear to me, I should prefer a Packet to any other. We have a frigate going to the Mediterranean, but she is charged with the Algerine Ambassador. . . .

By the account received from Alexandria yesterday, Lord Keith's letter to Lord Elgin says that the Redoubts were carried with little loss. Sir J. H. Hutchinson does not say a word in his upon the subject of the attack on them, so that I hope Mrs. Ricketts' information is unfounded.

Grey

7 October, 1801.

. . . Mr. Addington does not come to town to-day, but I will embrace the first favourable moments to state General Coote's pretensions and your good wishes to him. The blockade of Alexandria has certainly been a very severe and arduous service.

Rear-Admiral Blankett

10 October, 1801.

I return you many thanks for your obliging letters from Suez, and for the able exertions you have made under extreme difficulties to achieve the conquest of Egypt. I heartily hope your health¹ has not suffered materially, and that I shall soon have the happiness of taking you by the hand and assuring you in person of the esteem and regard with which I am, yours most truly.

Addington

30 October, 1801.

Confidential. I wish to put you upon your guard upon the subject of medals to the Army²

¹ News of his death reached England 2nd December (see *The Times*, 4th December 1801).

² The Army were more fortunate in the matter of medals. Compare the following announcements in *The Times* :

'The Duke of York having requested The King would be

and Navy employed upon the expedition in Egypt. None were given, or thought of, on the reduction of Minorca, which must be considered equal to, if not superior to, any enterprise we have been engaged in during the last five years, and the surviving officers who served upon that occasion will feel themselves very much aggrieved if such a distinction is made. Sir James Saumarez and the officers who served under him will also find reason to complain, and we shall have other competitors whom it will be difficult to resist.

Addington

15 November, 1801.

. . . Lord Keith's relations and connexions are unanimously of opinion that the title he now holds is the most appropriate, he being descended by the mother's side from Keith Earl Marcheale.

Grey

18 November, 1801.

I have been, and am, torn to pieces by the cough you saw me in a paroxysm of, and it is

pleased to bestow some distinguishing mark of his approbation on the conduct of the Army of Egypt. His Majesty has been pleased to order Medals to be struck in honour of the Egyptian Campaign, with suitable inscriptions and emblematical designs, to be given to the officers and soldiers of the Army' (27th January 1802).

'The officers of the Guards who have been in Egypt are to have gold medals; the N.C.O.s and privates silver ones, by the desire of The King. . . . Sir Ralph Abercromby's portrait is to be on one side' (3rd February 1802).

'The Gold Medals given by the Grand Seignor to our officers who served in Egypt, were last week begun to be distributed. They are very handsome and do honour to his munificence. But in the grateful remembrance of their countrymen will be the best monument of their glory and fame' (16th February 1802).

thought proper to order me into the country, where I intend going in a day or two, and shall not probably see Mr. Addington in the interval. I therefore return General Coote's letters: indeed there is a passage in them relative to Sir J. Hutchinson that I should doubt the propriety of communicating beyond ourselves, it being in contemplation to give English peerages to the two Chieftains, and I believe a Pension to Sir J. Hutchinson. Anything therefore that diminishes in the smallest degree the exalted merit which is given to him here would be ill received, and the best line General Coote can take is to seek his object through him.

Addington

7 December, 1801.

I received the enclosed from Mr. Elphinstone, brother to Lord Keith, this morning—and I foresee that if a Pension is given to Lord Hutchinson and not to Lord Keith, you and I shall be attacked most virulently.

Keith

Rochetts, 26 December, 1801.

. . . The moment the Articles of Peace are carried into execution, you will be authorized to return to England, either by sea or land as may best suit your convenience. That you may long enjoy health, with the honour you have won, is the hearty wish of your Lordship's very faithful and obedient servant.

Admiral Crosby

20 March, 1802.

Permit me to interest you in favour of my friend, Major-General Coote, who, I have just

learnt from the enclosed, intends to offer himself as a candidate to succeed his brother in the representation of the Queen's County; the General is so valuable a man both in public and private life that, if you are not engaged to exert your powerful influence in favour of another, I flatter myself you will take in good part the liberty I exercise in naming him to you.

Keith

30 April, 1802.

. . . I have conversed with your brother upon the subject of the Booty at Cairo and Alexandria; he had previously to my seeing him submitted the representation he proposed to make at the Porte to Lord Hawkesbury, and I will state to his Lordship my anxious wishes to obtain justice for the British captors to-morrow. Mr. Tooke, the Company's Agent, is, I understand, a very active, intelligent man, and will, I have no doubt, manage the business well under the sanction of Lord Elgin. . . .

Keith

8 October, 1802.

I find on inquiring this morning into the circumstance of your Lordship's letter that, in consequence of a conversation which passed between you and Sir Evan Nepean a few days ago, the copy of the Navy Board's Report on a consideration of your correspondence with Captain Hallowell, respecting the purchase of shoes in the Mediterranean, had been transmitted to your Lordship . . . although the entry of the letter does not appear; at any rate you may be satisfied that it could have been withheld only from accident, and not from design.

I will take an early opportunity of referring to . . . the Court Martial held for the trial of the officers of the Ajax, Hector and Diane ; and in the meanwhile I shall give directions that the Navy and Victualling Boards may examine as soon as possible the accounts before them of your expenditure for the Mediterranean service.

I was not aware till the receipt of your Lordship's letter that any reports of the description you mention had been circulated, and considering the length of our acquaintance, and the habits of friendship in which we have always lived, your Lordship may readily believe that I am not at all disposed to listen to representations to your prejudice.

Keith

14 October, 1802.

. . . I can assure your Lordship that I have not heard a sentence upon the subject from any officer arrived from the Mediterranean, with the exception of Captain Martin, who since I saw you at the Drawing Room related what he had communicated to Mr. Brown, which I advised him to make known to you.

Keith

31 October, 1802.

I will take the first favourable opportunity to converse with Mr. Addington upon the subject which naturally interests you so much.

THE CHANNEL FLEET

ADMIRAL THE HON. WILLIAM CORNWALLIS

VICE-ADMIRAL SIR HENRY HARVEY

VICE-ADMIRAL JAMES GAMBIER

VICE-ADMIRAL SIR ANDREW MITCHELL

I. INTRODUCTION

DURING the period of St. Vincent's command of the Channel Fleet the possibility had been explored of combined operations, having as their aim the isolation of Brest and the capture of the combined Franco-Spanish fleet in harbour there. The adverse reports of Sir Charles Grey, who would have commanded the troops, led to the proposals being rejected and to the employment of the Expeditionary Force elsewhere. During Cornwallis's period of command, the Channel Fleet was called upon mainly to contain the Franco-Spanish fleet in Brest, thereby enabling operations to be undertaken in the Baltic, in Egypt, and in the West Indies in security. The possibility of the sudden intervention of an enemy squadron from another station, upsetting all calculations, was removed by the close blockade maintained off Brest harbour. The escape of Ganteaume's Squadron in January 1801 was not repeated during the remainder of the year, though reports of intended sailings were continually in circulation.

The French fleet in Brest was commanded by Admiral Villaret Joyeuse, who succeeded Latouche-Tréville in February 1801. About the same time Admiral Gravina succeeded Massaredo in command of the Spanish squadron. The effective strength of the Combined Fleet varied

from time to time as ships were paid off or brought forward ; but at the end of May, when Saumarez handed over the command of the Inshore Squadron to Rear-Admiral Thornbrough in the *Mars*, the enemy's fleet was reported as 17 sail of the line (6 three-deckers ; 11 two-deckers), 12 frigates, 9 corvettes, and several transports, in the outer roadstead, ready for sea. Cornwallis had 16 sail of the line (13 three-deckers ; 3 two-deckers) and 4 frigates off Ushant, together with an inshore squadron consisting of 6 sail of the line.

The strength of his fleet was not diminished by the detachment of Sir James Saumarez to Cadiz, the loss being balanced by Sir Robert Calder rejoining from the West Indies, and by an accession of strength very shortly afterwards on the return of the Baltic Fleet.

In addition to the main fleet, a squadron of 5 sail of the line and 4 frigates, under the command of Sir Edward Pellew, blockaded Rochefort, where Admiral Neilly had taken refuge, after an attempt to unite with Ganteaume in his escape from Brest to the Mediterranean.

The blockade of Brest offered little opportunity for the Channel Fleet to distinguish itself. During the invasion preparations, however, it witnessed the conjoint manœuvres in Brest harbour when General Bernadotte inspected the forces there in August 1801.

After the military manœuvres, stated a letter from Brest, dated 15th August, in the Paris papers—

General Bernadotte went on board the *Océan*, where Admiral Villaret had prepared a new spectacle for him. Two corvettes unmoored and commenced a sham fight, which lasted for two hours ; the fire was well supported, and the manœuvres were performed with precision. They

were dismasted and unrigged ; and at the end of the action, replaced their masts and set up their rigging with astonishing promptitude.

After dinner, the representation of a descent took place in the Bay of Anjou, which was effected by 9 gun-boats, each carrying 90 men, and the boats belonging to the ships in the Road, which were also armed ; the whole being supported by the fire of a frigate. The place destined for the disembarkation was defended by troops, and by three land batteries, which commenced their fire. The boats, in two divisions, returned the fire of the batteries, while they rowed towards the shore. The action continued nearly an hour. The fire from the boats having ceased, that of the musketry began. As soon as the troops were landed, they carried the batteries, with cries of *Vive la République*. The troops that defended the place fell back upon Brest towards the evening.

The French were evidently taking their preparations seriously, and the Windsor Castle, flagship of Vice-Admiral Mitchell, arriving at Plymouth on 27th August, reported the regret of the Channel Fleet 'that the enemy would not afford them occasion to partake of the amusement.'

On 4th October the French galliot Hind came out from Brest with the news, received by telegraph, that the preliminaries of peace had been signed in London ; and on 15th October the Suwarrow (14), Lieutenant Nicholson, arrived at Plymouth from off Brest. Nicholson had been sent into Brest, under a flag of truce, by Cornwallis, and he reported being received with the greatest joy, experiencing the most polite attention from all ranks of people. An account of his experiences is to be found in 'The Naval Chronicle,' 1801, vol. vi. p. 344, and in *The Times* of 20th October 1801.

II. LETTERS

Vice-Admiral Sir Henry Harvey 20 February, 1801.

You will probably have heard before this can reach you, that circumstances had occurred which would render my resuming the command of the Channel Fleet a matter of some uncertainty : the point has now been decided, and I seize the earliest moment to apprise you that in consequence of the resignation of Lord Spencer, His Majesty has been graciously pleased to call for my services at the Admiralty Board, and that I have this day taken my seat.

Among the important considerations connected with my present situation, no one subject has occupied my attention more than the fixing on my successor in the command of the Channel Fleet ; and after weighing all the circumstances, I found that I could not discharge my duty more faithfully than by recommending Admiral Cornwallis to His Majesty for that important trust ; and I flatter myself from the high character he bears as an officer that the choice which has been made, while it ensures the confidence of the public from the opinion universally entertained of his zeal and talents, will afford the fullest satisfaction to you and the rest of the officers now serving in the Channel Fleet.

The advantage which I have derived from your able assistance during my command, and the respect I have entertained for your character, will always make me anxious, whenever it may be in my power, to meet any wish of yours, and to testify to you, with how much truth and regard, I have the honour to be, etc., etc.

Cornwallis

24 February, 1801.

Captain Sutton, late of the *Prince George*, now of the *Alcmene*, was removed into the latter ship for the express purpose of accompanying Sir Hyde Parker on the Baltic Expedition, where he has much local knowledge. The *Alcmene* shall be replaced by a good frigate, well commanded, probably the *Leda*, the moment she can be spared. . . . I beg you will look out for a Surgeon, as I shall be obliged to take Mr. Baird from you in a few days.

Cornwallis

28 February, 1801.

It is evident from all our intelligence, as well as from the necessity we know the French fleet at Brest is in for provisions of all kinds, but particularly for wine and brandy, that they will hazard a great deal to get their large fleet of victuallers out of the Morbihan, and endeavour at the same time to cut off the two line of battle-ships stationed in Quiberon Bay and before Port L'Orient; and although Captain Stopford is a most meritorious and judicious officer, he does not fill the eye of the public like Sir Edward Pellew; and it being near the time of relieving those posts and that one of them is actually relieved, I submit to you the policy of ordering L'Impétueux to relieve the Excellent.

Cornwallis

1 March, 1801.

Lieutenants Grossett, Joyce, and Sippings are removed from the *Ville de Paris* to make room for the three lieutenants of your choice, and whenever you can pick up any more of your own school, vacancies shall be made for them.

Cornwallis

9 March, 1801.

The manning of the Powerful and Zealous, and filling up the other ships of Sir Hyde Parker's squadron, has consumed all the ordinary and able seamen we have, and I see no means of giving a stamina to the ships of the line coming forward, except by taking a certain number of able seamen from the ships of the line which compose the Channel Fleet, and supplying the place of them with marines. Having foreseen that this measure must be resorted to when the Northern Confederacy was accomplished, I instituted a very minute enquiry into the state of the above-mentioned ships' companies, by a new form of Muster, which the Admirals of Divisions and Squadrons were required to make, with the utmost degree of precision ; but it will be necessary that they should go over this work again, and that an abstract of the different classes of able seamen, ordinary seamen, and landmen, taking them as they really are, without regard to the character they bear on the books, should be sent to the Admiralty Board. I should hope, from the idea I have formed of the state of the squadron, that I shall be enabled to draw from the first rates 60 men, the second rates 50, and the third rates 40 upon the average, and perhaps some small proportion from most of the frigates—I mean those which have been long commissioned.

As it is not extraordinary that officers should differ a little in their opinions of the qualifications of men, I think, if it could be managed, it would be very desirable that the same officers should muster the whole squadron ; and, if I could be allowed to suggest to you my opinion of the officers to be employed on this service, it would

be Admirals Collingwood and Whitshed, and whoever may command the Advanced Squadron for the time being. By this mode of examination only, the comparative qualifications of the different ships can be fairly ascertained, and with these returns before us, I should feel no difficulty in fixing the exact proportion of men to be taken from each ship, provided you should concur with me in opinion that it could ultimately be carried to such an extent. At first perhaps it might only be necessary to take away a part, and to call for further drafts as the ships in which these men may be appointed to serve should come forward.

The flag officers must be enjoined to secrecy, for if the captains get scent of it, much clamour and perhaps resistance may be made. Looking upon it as the only measure which can enable us to reinforce the Baltic and Channel Fleets, I am regardless of the unpopularity which will attach upon me. Confident of your support, it matters not what others say. . . . The sooner this measure is carried into execution the better.

Cornwallis

13 March, 1801.

I am very happy to learn that you have found comfort on board the *Ville de Paris*, for which I have been greatly indebted to your excellent relation, Captain Grey, who has always treated me with the affection of a son. You are a much younger man than I am, yet there is no harm in taking care of yourself. . . .

. . . You have acted with your usual judgment in bringing the squadron into Torbay, where the ships composing it will be soon filled up, and the people recruited with good beef and vegetables. . . . Remember me kindly to Captain Ricketts. . . .

Captain Sutton

14 March, 1801.

I felt I was discharging a duty to the public in naming you to Admiral Cornwallis, as the fittest person I knew to serve as First Captain of the squadron under his command. . . .

Cornwallis

16 March, 1801.

. . . Many thanks for your letter of the 14th. Nothing could be better judged than your returning to Torbay, a measure very strongly recommended by this Board some months ago, a copy of which was sent to Sir Henry Harvey. . . .

. . . I very much approve your dividing the musters among the Admirals, it will be the sooner accomplished, and perhaps better than if it had been confined to the two I named, although their faculties are well adapted ; but the labour would have been so great, it might have appalled them.

I am very sorry to learn that Admiral Whitshed is unwell : he is a large man and confinement to a ship seems not to agree with his constitution.

. . . We have a variety of intelligence which confirms that sent by Sir James Saumarez, and if these gentry do not make their escape soon, they will find it very difficult when the days are longer and the weather more moderate.

Rear-Admiral Whitshed

16 March, 1801.

I explained fully and distinctly to Mrs. Hawkins Whitshed that during the existence of Sir John Colpoys, and of a Vice-Admiral who stands higher than any other in the opinion of the public, no other flag officer could be brought to the Admiralty Board by me. I wish to have it

clearly understood that no man ever presided at it more free and independent or less encumbered than I do. I have not one debt of office, for Lord Spencer upon my making the most liberal offer, as liberally declined saddling me with one, and that the claims I shall always feel the strongest upon me are those for public services past and to come : to meet those all promotion to the rank of Commander or Post-Captain, on other pretences, is stopped entirely, not even one of the lieutenants of the *Ville de Paris* can now be brought forward, and of course no other person. . . . [Captain Puget] . . .

You have been twice absent on leave since I was appointed to command the Channel Fleet, and some of the flag officers, who I know wish for and really want some relaxation, have not been absent from their duty. I think in fairness their convenience should first be consulted, but when their wishes have been gratified, I hardly need tell you that, so soon as I can with propriety, I shall feel every disposition to meet yours.

Cornwallis

1 April, 1801.

The French have seen, felt, and understood so much of your character, that theirs must be changed materially if they face you in preference to [me].

Rear-Admiral Sir James Saumarez

1 April, 1801.

The manner in which you have conducted the Advanced Squadron calls upon me to repeat my admiration of it. Your taking the anchorage

in Douarnenez Bay during the late equinoctial gales has been of the utmost importance, and prevented the crippling one or more of your squadron. . . .

Sir Edward Pellew, Bt.

1 April, 1801.

I conclude you have looked into Basque Road, for if the *Argonaut* and *Union* are anchored below Isle d'Aix, they are attackable. The *Impétueux* and *Robust*, commanded by you and Brown, are equal to anything, and you have two good fellows in the frigates.

Admiral Cornwallis

20 April, 1801.

Upon a review of Captain d'Auvergne's intelligence, and coupling it with the observations made by Captain Cunningham of the *Clyde*, than whom I do not know a more correct officer, I incline to your opinion that your squadron should not be separated in the manner recommended by the Board, and I have the happiness to know that every individual member reposes the same confidence in your judgment, zeal, and ability that I do, and agrees with me in a full approbation of the disposition you have made of your frigates and Advanced Squadron under the orders of Sir James Saumarez, to keep up a communication between Brest and the body of your squadron.

I am glad you were able to detach Sir Edward Pellew so immediately. The *Majestic* and *Orion* will supply the places of your crippled ships, and I trust we shall soon be able to send you two more. . . .

Rear-Admiral Thornbrough

22 April, 1801.

I rejoice in the safety of yourself and gallant crew, after the hairbreadth escape you have had. An enquiry into the cause of the accident must necessarily take place.

Pellew

1 May, 1801.

. . . I was quite confident that you would not allow the French ships which escaped from L'Orient to lay quietly in Basque Road; the position they have since taken places them out of your reach. We are exerting every nerve to reinforce Admiral Cornwallis, with a view to his adding to your squadron. . . .

Your son's name stands in the same place Lord Spencer put it on the list of candidates for the Royal Foundation in Portsmouth Academy. Are you so partial to that seminary as to hazard a son there?

Saumarez

25 May, 1801.

We have just given the Prince of Bouillon a distinguishing pendant and considerably augmented his force, and Captain Cunningham of the Clyde is appointed to command a squadron of frigates, sloops, and gun brigs with orders to co-operate with the Prince—the headquarters of the latter are Guernsey. We can ill spare a ship of the line at this critical period; should a flag officer be found necessary to the defence of these islands, there is no one so fit, in all respects, as yourself, and I shall have the greatest pleasure, in that event, to name you to the King.

Cornwallis

27 May, 1801.

. . . Our accounts from Paris are positive as to the enemy giving you the meeting, and that Admiral La Crosse has been dispatched to Brest to combine the force there and in the neighbourhood with extraordinary powers: that this intelligence may soon be realised is not more devoutly wished by yourself than by [me].

Saumarez

4 June, 1801.

I am glad the *Cæsar* is in Cawsand Bay, because you will the sooner be informed of His Majesty's most gracious intentions towards you, which I have greater pleasure in than I can express. As you are to be placed at the head of a detached squadron, destined for a very important service, at no great distance from home, I hope the *Cæsar* will not be long in filling up.

Lady Spencer

20 June, 1801.

Lord St. Vincent presents his most respectful compliments to Lady Spencer and begs the favour of her acceptance of a medal, struck from the appropriate design Her Ladyship honoured him with.

Cornwallis

20 June, 1801.

I hope you will do me the honour to accept of a medal, which I have caused to be struck to commemorate the exemplary conduct of the officers, seamen, and marines of the *Ville de Paris*, in the late trying times.

Cornwallis

22 June, 1801.

I have been always of opinion that fireships might be applied to advantage in Camaret Bay and Bertheaume, but I am not well enough acquainted with the Goulet to give a decisive opinion upon the proposition made by Captain Brisbane. The *Alecto* Fireship will be sent to you as soon as possible, and Captain B. thinks the fire-grapnels he wishes to have fixed may be made in the fleet: any preparation of that kind here would be immediately conveyed across the water. Whatever may be the event of the enterprise, I will support it and every other attempt you may judge fit to make on the enemy's fleet.

Cornwallis

29 July, 1801.

The achievement¹ announced in your obliging letter of the 24th certainly rivals, if it does not surpass, every enterprise of this, or any previous war. I am much concerned at the loss of so many of the gallant men who were engaged in it. . . .

It is a vexatious thing that the other plan has been divulged: nevertheless, the vessel in question shall be sent to you the moment she is put in order.

By every intelligence we receive, Egypt is the object nearest the First Consul's heart, and

¹ Volunteers from the Inshore frigates, commanded by Captain Brisbane of H.M.S. *Doris*, carried out a night attack in Camaret Bay, 21/22 July. The French *la Chevette* was boarded and carried by the boats of the *Doris*, *Beaulieu*, and *Uranie*, under the direction of Lieutenant Losack of H.M.S. *Ville de Paris*.

we are told that the squadron in Brest is bound thither, if it eludes your vigilance. Heartily wishing you a speedy meeting with it. . . .

Vice-Admiral Sir Andrew Mitchell 8 August, 1801.

I return you many thanks for your letter of the 27th July, and I heartily hope you will soon have an opportunity of giving additional proof of your zeal and ability in the service of your King and Country, for we have every reason to believe the enemy is determined to put to sea from Brest and that Egypt is his object. We have heard nothing of the intention of Lord Hugh Seymour to apply to be relieved: circumstanced as I am, I cannot enter into an engagement for this or any other command: suffice it that I have the best disposition towards you, and shall be happy in any opportunity to manifest the esteem and regard with which I am very sincerely yours. . . .

Lady Calder

17 August, 1801.

There can be no difficulty in Sir Robert's coming ashore whenever his health requires it, but there are insuperable objections to the Prince of Wales being in port longer than Admiral Cornwallis thinks fit, for it would be a very partial consideration if she had any preference shown to her, the service off Ushant being much more severe than a run down the Trade and home again, to all but the Chief.

Why Sir Robert should be angry at the letter I wrote him, the instant I heard of his approach, having made a tour of the rendezvous he was supposed to be upon before it reached him, I

cannot divine, but I do most sincerely lament that the good or bad opinion my brethren have of me should depend upon such chimeras.

Has Mr. W. Ley Symonds passed his examination at the Navy Office? If not, let him try the next examining day, for a certificate of his having passed abroad won't do.

Cornwallis

18 August, 1801.

Secret and confidential. I desired an official letter to be written to you yesterday merely as matter of form; to acquaint you, that the commissions of Captain Losack and Lieutenant Clapham would be properly registered, and that Mr. Phillips would be appointed purser of a sloop. . . . I suspect, from what I have seen in your public letter, that some doubts arose in your mind, in what manner to dispose of the commission of Commander, from the circumstance of Captain Losack not having actually assisted in the attack. I confess that I should have had the same sort of feeling about it, but considering that Captain Losack had an important share in the arrangement of the plan, and was performing what he thought a very essential service in ensuring its execution, I do not see how the commission could well be disposed of otherwise.

Captain Brisbane, I observe, mentions that the First Lieutenant of the Beaulieu had considerable merit in the attack of the Chevrette, and carried the orders of Captain Losack into execution with great spirit and precision: I understand his name is Maxwell. Should you have formed the same opinion of the services of this officer, and are desirous of rewarding them, I have enclosed a blank commission for

that purpose ; but you will understand that I leave it wholly and entirely to you, to fill it up in his favour or return it, whichever may be most agreeable to you, having no other meaning than to put it in your power to extend the reward for the gallant service performed, beyond the original limits, if you like so to do ; and the more strongly to mark my attention to you, and by the same rule to allow you (if you think fit) to dispose of the Lieutenant's commission intended for Mr. Phillips, in any manner you think fit.

I am sorry that the state of the enemy's preparations at Brest has rendered it a matter of absolute necessity to keep you so long at sea : the Board will however have it in its power to reinforce you immediately, and enable you, if you judge fit, to send in some of your ships to refresh. You will have heard, by the public prints and other communications, that the negotiation with France draws to a conclusion, and from the best opinion I can form, the public is correct, so far, in its judgment, that the great question must shortly be decided, but whether by a cessation of hostilities, or by a termination of all negotiation, it is beyond the reach of my foresight to determine. The moment I can clearly see my way, I shall communicate my opinion thereupon.

Cornwallis

2 September, 1801.

I feel a considerable degree of delicacy in communicating to you my apprehension that the change my relation, Captain Whitby, has thought fit to make in the œconomy of the *Ville de Paris* may occasion dissatisfaction on board her. Without entering into the merits of the

case, which probably are in favour of the new system, we found so much advantage from the quiet disposition of the people, their good manners, and apparent detestation of the licentious and mutinous conduct of many of the ships of the Channel Fleet, that it was thought advisable not to brace them up too tight; and it is much to be feared that any material alterations in the modes they have been so long accustomed to will occasion ill-humour and consequent evils.

I am sure you will do me the justice to believe that nothing short of my anxious desire that the utmost harmony should prevail in the fleet you so ably command, more particularly in the ship bearing your flag, could have prompted me to make this communication, which is intended for your private ear, and to be acted upon or not as you shall judge expedient.

Captain J. Sutton

5 September, 1801.

Many thanks for your letter of the 29th, by which the reflections we had made upon what lately happened in the *Ville de Paris* are verified. I lament both the cause and effect most exceedingly, because I had flattered myself that the example of that ship's crew would have kept others in order.

Cornwallis

7 September, 1801.

I hope ere long to do justice to Captain Ricketts, in whose favour I am as much interested as you can wish. Every officer and person you wish to be removed from the *Ville de Paris* shall be otherwise disposed of, and succeeded by those of your choice. I am extremely concerned to

learn that there has been any impropriety in the conduct of Captain Sutton towards you, the more so as I had described him, as I really thought, propriety itself. Whoever you think fit to name as his successor, of sufficient rank in the list of post-captains not to give offence to the old officers serving in the Channel Fleet, shall be communicated to the Board, and I have no doubt of his being appointed immediately, and I am persuaded you will wish Captain Sutton should be taken care of.

Cornwallis

28 September, 1801.

I am very happy to learn that you have succeeded with Captain Domett, who is an officer of great experience and sound judgment. Should you upon consulting him determine on the appointment of another captain to the *Ville de Paris*, Captain Whitby may have the choice of the *Belleisle* or *Defiance*, for he is too high on the list of post-captains to serve in a frigate, several junior to him having been promoted to ships of the line against their inclinations. Any person you think fit to name as his successor shall be immediately appointed. Should the choice fall on Captain Ricketts, I shall feel it my duty to depart from the principle I had laid down, for your accommodation, having nothing more at heart than to render the arduous situation you are placed in as comfortable as the nature of the service will permit.

Cornwallis

2 October, 1801.

The Preliminaries of Peace were signed last night, and I have infinite satisfaction of ac-

quainting you that your brother, the Marquis, will negotiate the Definitive Treaty. The moment the Preliminaries are exchanged, you will receive directions for the disposal of the fleet. Torbay—a port in Ireland—and Cawsand Bay will probably be the principal points, until the Definitive Treaty is signed, which I will thank you to keep to yourself.

Mr. Baron Hotham

7 October, 1801.

It is impossible for you, or any of Commodore Sutton's connexions, to feel more interested than I do in placing him above the reach of slander. It is justice to Admiral Cornwallis to state that he wrote me a very handsome letter about him, and I am persuaded he (the Admiral) will be much pleased with the appointment the Board has given him. To have contributed in the smallest degree to the comfort of you and your amiable family is a very pleasing reflection. . . .

Cornwallis

17 October, 1801.

You have acted very judiciously touching the French Coasting Trade, for it is certainly right to show by our conduct that the negotiation is carried on with good faith on our part.

Addington

22 October, 1801.

Lord Pelham and I called at your house on our way from the House of Lords, thinking it would be right to have a little conversation about the French troops, which Mr. Otto has given notice are soon to sail from Brest for St. Domingo, where in my judgment they should not go

without passports from hence, and also the propriety of communicating our sending a squadron to Jamaica. . . .

Cornwallis

3 November, 1801.

I have derived the highest satisfaction from your obliging letter of the 1st, and shall always consider your having been placed at the head of the Channel Fleet as an event of the greatest importance to the Country at large and of the most solid comfort to [me].

Cornwallis

9 November, 1801.

. . . I have no doubt of the truth of Lieutenant Oldham's observation, for nothing can be more slovenly than the conduct of our Port Admirals touching Cartels.

Upon the whole Admiral Villaret is in luck not to have been discovered, as his treatment must have been that of a Spy.

Viscount Garlies

10 November, 1801.

Until the Definitive Treaty is signed, we cannot supersede any officer whose health enables him to serve; in my judgment, nothing can be so hazardous as our giving way upon this point, and having refused it to Lord Nelson, I trust that the reason of the thing will reconcile Your Lordship to continuing a little longer in Torbay.

Cornwallis

20 November, 1801.

I do not think it probable that the squadron will be required to go to sea, unless you perceive

a degree of restlessness among the people to make it necessary. I had hoped that your exemplary conduct, and the presence of the other flag officers, would have kept them quiet until the signature of the Definitive Treaty ; but should your apprehension of a contrary conduct continue, I will recommend the measure you propose to His Majesty's Government.

Cornwallis

Langtons, 5 December, 1801.

As far as I am able to judge, the anonymous letter which I return is the production of some melanguising¹ discontented officer. When I filled the situation you now hold, scarce a post past without my receiving one or more of these letters, and I am now frequently pestered with them ; and I agree with you that they ought to be treated with contempt, unless they lead to mischief, of which I do not apprehend to be the case in this instance.

Addington

Langtons, 16 December, 1801.

I am happy to learn the effect produced in Beerhaven, from the vigorous effort made by Rear-Admiral Campbell and Captain Eyles, and I am of opinion that Admiral Cornwallis should be directed to proceed to Beerhaven in the *Ville de Paris* with powers to assemble a Court Martial, if he is not already in possession of them—and I trust that the Attorney and Solicitor-General will agree with me that in cases of mutiny the Articles of War authorise carrying the sentence into execution immediately in the Narrow Seas as well as on Foreign Stations.

¹ This word is not in the *N.E.D.*

Viscount Garlies*Rochetts*, 26 December, 1801.

Having departed from a principle to accommodate your Lordship's business in the north, I felt a considerable degree of reproach on finding that your Lordship had not proceeded thither. On this and every other occasion since we have been known to each other, I have shown the most marked attention to your interests, and shall have great pleasure in the continuance of it. . . .

Hon. Charles Herbert

8 February, 1802.

I was in hopes that recent events would have convinced you and every other officer in the navy, that the disinclination I showed to permit officers to retire from their ships before the signature of the Definitive Treaty proceeded from a sense of public duty, which I never will swerve from. . . .

Sir John Warren

4 March, 1802.

A provision for the French Pilots has been some time in contemplation, and the worthy man you interest yourself in will not be forgot.

Cornwallis*Rochetts*, 10 April, 1802.

I am sorry to have kept you so long in Torbay, which has been occasioned entirely by the apprehension of some disorder among the seamen arising out of their impatience to be liberated, a disgrace I have felt confident we should not experience while your flag was flying. I hope in a few days to release you from further confinement.

Cornwallis

20 April, 1802.

On my arrival in Town this morning Sir Thomas Troubridge informed me that the *Latona* had proceeded to Lymington with your baggage. I therefore desired the Board would authorise you to hoist your flag on board any other frigate under your orders, and I heartily hope you will be soon relieved from the irksome details of the squadron in Torbay.

With many thanks for your steady perseverance to the end. . . .

THE WEST INDIES

VICE-ADMIRAL THE RIGHT HON. LORD
HUGH SEYMOUR

REAR-ADMIRAL SIR JOHN THOMAS DUCKWORTH

REAR-ADMIRAL ROBERT MONTAGU

REAR-ADMIRAL THOMAS TOTTY

I. INTRODUCTION

IN the West Indies Lord Hugh Seymour held the command at Jamaica, and Rear-Admiral Duckworth commanded the Leeward Islands station. In April 1801 General Sir George Nugent was appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Jamaica ; Lady Nugent's Journal, edited and republished by Frank Cundall in 1907, contains a graphic description of life on the station at this period.

On 10th May 1801 dispatches from Duckworth, brought by Captain Ekins, and from General Thomas Trigge, brought by Captain M'Mahon, were received announcing the capture of the Danish and Swedish West India Islands ; and on 1st June further news arrived of the occupation of St. Eustatia and Saba. St. Eustatia was evacuated by the French on 16th April ; and in consequence of a deputation sent by the inhabitants to the officer commanding at St. Kitts, the Arab sloop (Captain John Perkins) was dispatched, with 100 men of the 3rd Regiment of Foot ('The Buffs') under Colonel Blent, to take possession of St. Eustatia and Saba until peace should be restored. This operation was gazetted on 2nd June 1801, and on 6th June Lieutenant-General Thomas Trigge and Rear-Admiral John Thomas Duckworth were gazetted Knights Companion of the Order of the Bath.

These Leeward Islands operations caused a

certain amount of dissatisfaction at home from the way they were conducted financially; on 5th February 1802 the Prime Minister announced to the House of Commons Committee of Supply that, in view of the excess in expenditure over the estimate given by General Trigge, the Government had determined 'to appoint a Special Committee to proceed to the West Indies to examine into the Accounts, to go from island to island and enquire upon the spot into the facts upon which they were founded.'

Meanwhile, the terms of capitulation of the Danish Islands gave great offence in Denmark, with whom Nelson found himself in sympathy; it accounts for the attitude taken up by Denmark subsequently to the armistice at Copenhagen. On 30th September 1801 *The Times* printed the following letter from Hamburg:

The Copenhagen Official Gazette of the 15th instant and private accounts, announce that the restitution of the Danish West India Islands has hitherto been delayed, because the Danish Court not only refuses to consent to the confiscation of the French, Spanish and Dutch property accumulated there since the year 1794, but it even demands of the English to restore those islands in the same state in which they were surrendered. It farther requires an indemnification for the expences occasioned by its late hostile armaments against Great Britain. The British Ministry, however, have not only refused to grant such claims, but insist upon the strict execution of that Article in the Capitulation which stipulates the confiscation of enemies' property in the Danish West Indies.

According to letters from St. Croix, this property has been actually confiscated and sold, under a Commission, appointed for that purpose by the English Governor, Brigadier-General Francis Fuller.

The Danish West India merchants finding themselves

in a most distressed condition, in consequence of the long interruption of their trade, have lately become so clamorous, that their Government have felt it necessary to state the grounds of the delayed restitution of its West India possessions.

* * * * *

With the cessation of hostilities, West Indian affairs assumed great importance. In the first place, the restitution of the Danish Islands became due under the terms of their occupation, and the sailing of a squadron with troops and merchandise was accordingly notified from Copenhagen. Further, the French had been awaiting the return of peace to dispatch their West India Squadron which had been preparing the whole summer under Admiral Villaret Joyeuse. The Dutch also had squadrons to dispatch both to the West and to the East Indies.

In view of the large forces about to sail to the West Indies, it was necessary to consider the reinforcement of our own squadron in those waters, and a force from the Channel Fleet was therefore detailed to be held in readiness, and victualled for six months' service. The command of the detachment was given to Vice-Admiral Sir Andrew Mitchell, with Rear-Admiral Hon. George Campbell second in command; orders were issued for the squadron to proceed to Bantry Bay and hold itself in readiness for sea. The orders were quite unexpected. 'The fleet was lying snugly in harbour [at Plymouth] with top-masts struck, when orders were received to put to sea without a moment's delay. In four hours, 12 ships of the line were under sail, and they left Plymouth during the tremendous gale of the 2nd [November] and were 8 days on their passage to Berehaven, experiencing uncommon bad weather.'

The delay in demobilisation and the dreariness of Bantry Bay had a deteriorating effect on the crews of the Channel Fleet ; further, it soon became common knowledge that Mitchell's destination was the West Indies, and a mutinous attitude was assumed, the crews intending to declare their intention not to weigh anchor except for England.

Incidents occurred in the *Téméraire* and *Formidable* on the 7th December ; but on the 10th December a seaman of the *Téméraire* was flogged and put in irons for misbehaviour towards a lieutenant, and attempts were made to rescue him. The *Téméraire* was Admiral Campbell's flagship ; the Admiral and Captain Eyles withstood the mutineers, had the ringleaders arrested, and sent them off to Mitchell's flagship for trial.

In view of the mutinous tendencies in the squadron, Mitchell was ordered to return with his squadron to a Channel port, and on 29th December he anchored at St. Helens.

News of the mutiny had reached London on Sunday night, the 13th December, being brought by Captain Seymour of the *Fisguard*. In consequence of the intelligence, says *The Times* of 17th December 1801, ' Mr. Addington set off very early on Monday morning for Brentwood, where Earl St. Vincent has been for some days on account of his health, to consult with His Lordship on the steps that should be immediately taken. Mr. Nepean and Sir T. Troubridge met him there.' It was decided to take special powers, under the Great Seal, for trying the mutineers, and on 18th December the Lord Chancellor, it is stated, ' was called out of Court by Mr. Nepean, in the progress of a very interesting case : After staying a few minutes out of Court, His Lordship returned

to adjourn the public business and went away. We believe it was for the purpose of affixing the Great Seal to the Commission for trying the mutineers.'

This Commission was a Court Martial warrant granting Sir Andrew Mitchell extraordinary powers as regards the death sentence. The trials began at Portsmouth on 6th January 1802, the first set extending over five days; the Court consisted of Mitchell as President, with Vice-Admiral Pole, Rear-Admirals Holloway, Collingwood, and Campbell, and Captains Wells, Jones, Gould, Grindall, Sir E. Nagle, Osborn, and Bertie. On 13th January St. Vincent laid the Minutes of these Courts Martial before the King; and the following day a second set of trials began. In almost every case, the mutineers were found guilty and suffered the death penalty.

Meanwhile, discussions had been going on regarding the Black Republic set up in the island of St. Domingo, and on 16th December 1801 *The Times* announced that 'most pressing applications have been made to Ministers by the French Government to permit the immediate sailing of the Expeditions now ready for sea at Brest, etc., for St. Domingo and the East Indies. The permission will not, however, there are many reasons to believe, be granted previous to the signing of the definitive Treaty.' The French necessity, however, was urgent: further, our own Government could not fail to take warning of the dangerous influence of the Negro Republic on our black subjects. 'The erection of a Negro Republic in the West Indies, consisting of half a million souls, and connected but nominally with France, would be extremely dangerous to the British possessions in that quarter. We are therefore

inclined to think,' said *The Times*, 26th October 1801, 'that whatever force the Chief Consul may send against Toussaint, he will receive every possible facility and assistance from our Government.'

This sentiment was re-echoed on 1st January 1802, upon receipt of the news from St. Domingo of the massacre of whites; and on 19th January Lord Hawkesbury made a statement on the subject in the House of Commons, consequent upon the sailing of the French squadrons, saying that the Brest fleet 'did not sail without a proper previous communication between this Country and the Government of France.'

At Jamaica, General Nugent had been involved in a diplomatic correspondence with Toussaint, which Lady Nugent mentions she herself transcribed to forward to England, in view of the delicacy of the subject. It was by the mail arriving on 19th January by H.M. Sloop *Racoon* that 'General Nugent has the satisfaction of finding that he has in every respect anticipated the wishes and orders of Government, on the subject of St. Domingo, even to the expressions to be made use of to General Toussaint, respecting the neutrality of England, etc.' The delicacy of the negotiations can be appreciated from the Jamaica letter in *The Times* of 15th March 1802 :

After a tedious negociation of two months, a treaty was concluded with Toussaint by the Lieut.-Governor of Jamaica, on the morning of the day on which the latter received advice of the signing of the Preliminaries of Peace. General Nugent, in consequence, sent to acquaint Toussaint's agents of the circumstance, which rendered void the Convention, and intimated a wish that they should immediately leave Jamaica, announcing that he had recalled the British Resident at Cape François.

Toussaint, on being apprized of these circumstances, accused the English of breach of faith, observing that they coalesced with France for the purpose of destroying him. . . . General Nugent, avoiding any colour of offence to France, interdicted all intercourse [with St. Domingo].

The French Squadron from Brest sailed on 15th December 1801, Admiral Villaret Joyeuse in command; Jérôme Bonaparte, brother of the First Consul, embarked in the fleet.

The squadrons from L'Orient, under Latouche-Tréville, and from Rochefort, under Delmotte, rendezvoused with the Brest squadron off Belleisle, the fleet then consisting of 22 ships of the line and 19 frigates; 12,000 troops were embarked, under General Leclerc, the First Consul's brother-in-law, who had recently been in command of the French army in Portugal. A Spanish detachment from Brest accompanied the Fleet, under Admiral Gravina; the rest of the Spanish fleet, which had been for so long blockaded at Brest, returned to Spain in March 1802.

The Expedition encountered extremely bad weather at the beginning of its voyage, and the *Duquesne* (74) and *Cornelia* (40), both full of troops, put into Lisbon, reporting that the fleet had been scattered; Gravina himself, with some of the Spanish ships, put into Ferrol. He sailed again, however; and Linois and the squadron which had opposed Saumarez at Algeciras sailed at the same time from Cadiz. Immediately afterwards came news that the Toulon ships under Ganteaume had passed through the Straits on the 20th January. Practically every seaworthy ship of the French Navy had been ordered to the West Indies.

Leclerc's operations, during which he suc-

cumbed to the climate, have been described at first hand by Moreau de Jonnés in his 'Adventures in Wars of the Republic and Consulate,' recently translated by General Abdy. On 5th February 1802 he disembarked his troops at St. Domingo, and his dispatches, together with Villaret's, will be found in *The Times* of 17th March 1802.

Villaret and the Brest Squadron took 46 days to cross the Atlantic. On 11th February Ganteaume reached St. Domingo, after a passage of 33 days from Toulon. Linois arrived on the 15th, having taken 28 days from Cadiz ; but in making the Cape, his squadron got amongst the breakers. The Saint Gennaro had a narrow escape, but the *Desaix*, which had fought against us at Algeciras, filled and became a total loss.

Further reinforcements from Brest followed in the *Zélé* (74), in company with the Dutch Squadron under Admiral Hartsinck, which sailed from the Texel, but put into Brest for repairs.

The strength of the combined French and Spanish forces to be employed in the West Indies led to the reinforcement of our own West India Squadrons. On 19th November a detachment from the Channel Fleet sailed for Jamaica, under the command of Commodore William Essington in the *Goliath*, and including in addition the *Captain* (Captain Charles Boyles), *Elephant* (Captain T. Foley), *Ganges* (Captain T. F. Fremantle), and *Brunswick* (Captain G. H. Stephens). This detachment was effected practically a month before the sailing of the Brest Squadron, and was followed by a further Channel Fleet detachment in February 1802, under Rear-Admiral George Campbell in the *Téméraire*, as soon as the Courts Martial for mutiny had been disposed of. In addition, the sailing of Ganteaume from Toulon and Linois

from Cadiz removed the French Mediterranean Squadrons from his station, and led Saumarez to direct Commodore Charles Tyler in the *Warrior*, with the *Bellona* (Captain Bertie), *Defence* (Captain Lord H. Paulet), and *Zealous* (Captain S. H. Linzee), to follow them to the West Indies.

Until the summer of 1802 the situation in the West Indies necessitated the presence of a strong battle squadron; but at the beginning of June, Tyler received instructions to return with his squadron to England, and Campbell followed shortly afterwards.

II. LETTERS

Lord Hugh Seymour

20 February, 1801.

You will probably have heard long before this reaches you that a very extraordinary revolution in the political hemisphere has placed me at the head of this Board.

I am sure you will be much gratified by my sending Lieutenant Augustus Leveson-Gower to Jamaica for promotion; and I have great pleasure in assuring Your Lordship, that you shall receive every possible support in the exercise of your command.

Rear-Admiral J. T. Duckworth

21 February, 1801.

Many thanks for your letter. You will hear from other quarters how I came here. Troubridge and Markham are my Neptunes, and the rest of the Board are well chosen. . . .

Commissioner Fanshawe

9 March [? April], 1801.

I am happy to have anticipated your wishes in favor of your son, by holding out every degree of sanction and encouragement to Admiral Duckworth to connive at officers quitting their ships and returning to England, which they will be the more prone to do, because of the unprofitableness of the station and the little prospect any of them have of adding to their fame or fortune. . . .

Mr. Addington

2 May, 1801.

I omitted to mention to you yesterday that if General Miranda's proposition, to be landed at Curaçoa with a large supply of arms, is approved, there will be no difficulty in carrying it into execution, and Lord Hugh Seymour may be instructed to co-operate with him.

Duke of Portland

6 May, 1801.

I will wait upon Your Grace as soon as the business of the Board will permit, and explain the hazard which the coasts of the United Kingdoms will run if a frigate is appointed to convey General Nugent to Jamaica on the eve of two Convoys being dispatched, one from Spithead and the other from Cork. The service in the Baltic has compelled us to take from the frigate force of Admirals Cornwallis and Dickson, and from the coast between Dunkirk and St. Maloes, so as to leave those services very bare indeed, and, under the present menacing aspect of invasion, I really feel that any farther diminution will be attended with the most serious consequences.

Duckworth

15 May, 1801.

The manner in which my friend General Trigge and you obtained possession of the Danish and Swedish islands is amongst the most fortunate events, as we are in a good train of negotiation, with every prospect of a peaceful termination of the flame which the Confederacy of the Northern Powers had lighted up ; and as it is probable the *status quo* will be resorted to, you will of course desist from treating the Danes and Swedes in your possession as prisoners of war, and on no account commission the Danish corvette. We have given Mr. Gregory the rank of Commander, and I should be very glad to employ him, but that is impossible, until more than one hundred meritorious officers of the same rank, who have been long on half-pay and completely neglected, are provided for. The same cause operates against the first lieutenant of the Leviathan, for the Board has come to a resolution not to make any promotion here ; consequently every vacancy that does not arise from death, or sentence of Court Martial, will be filled from hence. . . . Pray explain to your lieutenants that they cannot be promoted in any other way than I have before mentioned, which will show them that there is no want of zeal on your part to serve them, and that it originates from hence. . . . His Majesty has been graciously pleased to consent to a Baronetcy being conferred on you, as a mark of his royal approbation of your services, which I heartily congratulate you on. The Purser of the Leviathan is gone out to join that ship, which I am glad of, because of the strong objections I feel to an Admiral's Secretary being purser of the ship appointed to hoist his flag. . . .

Duckworth

20 June, 1801.

You will learn from Mr. Baker, that upon his representation, your honour, so justly due, is changed from the Baronetcy (of which I gave you notice) to the Red Ribband, which I heartily hope will be acceptable. That you may long live to wear it is the fervent wish of your very sincere and obedient servant.

Vice-Admiral Sir Andrew Mitchell 8 August, 1801.

. . . We have heard nothing of the intention of Lord Hugh Seymour to apply to be relieved : circumstanced as I am, I cannot enter into an engagement for this, or any other command. . . .

John Carthew, Esq.

7 September, 1801.

The sending out Admiral Montagu to Jamaica occasioned an alteration in the temporary disposition of the ship and sloop attached to the Convoy, but having seen that the interests of your brother would be affected by it, I gave directions that the Shark, after seeing the Trade to the several islands to Windward, should be sent to Jamaica.

Duckworth

14 September, 1801.

I am very much ashamed to be so much in arrear on the score of correspondence, having your several letters of the month of April, June, and July to acknowledge. Mr. Addington assured me positively that he would only grant £500 to the officers of the Army and the same sum to the Captains Ekins and Gregory, and asked my

opinion how it should be disposed of. I told him that it certainly was not your intention that Captain Ekins should be rewarded to the prejudice of Captain Gregory; and it appeared finally settled that the sum should be equally divided, and an explanation of this has since been obtained by Mr. Nepean from one of the Secretaries of the Treasury, out of all form and precedent, for the Admiralty has nothing to do with these transactions; and here it is proper I should state to you distinctly the very great impropriety of sending officers here with a view to obtain rank, and I do assure you Captain Gregory would have been sent back to you a Lieutenant, but for circumstances of a private nature respecting you, nor should I have entered into this explanation from any other motive, holding these discussions to be very improper, and in future I shall studiously avoid entering into them.

I have many thanks to make you for a turtle which was safely landed at Plymouth, and with every kind wish to you and yours . . .

Duckworth

21 September, 1801.

You cannot be unapprised that a Baronet is higher in rank than a Knight of the Bath, and I had every reason to believe that you ambitioned the former, and I really made the choice for you in the belief thereof, and, until Mr. Baker gave me reason for judging otherwise, I was in complete error. I am sorry that the Board does not agree with you upon the subject of indemnification for the expense you were at in entertaining the General Officers and their Suite during the late expedition. I confess myself to be an improper person to ask an opinion of, for I have

in the course of service been subjected to much of this expense, more particularly on the expedition to Martinique, etc., at the commencement of this war, when I possessed very small means. I not only had nineteen officers and their servants at my table every day during the passage to Barbadoes, but from island to island afterwards in as great number though not of equal rank, except in the instance of Sir Charles Grey, and it never entered into my imagination to ask for compensation; nor did I ever hear of a Commander-in-Chief receiving it. I am ready to acknowledge the Table Money is very inadequate, although allowed for the express purpose of keeping a constant table. . . .

[P.S.] The loss of the victualler and other two vessels is very lamely accounted for.

Duckworth

24 September, 1801.

I have spoken to Mr. Addington about the fees of your late creation, which he assured me should be paid.

Duckworth

2 October, 1801.

I snatch a moment to inform you that the Preliminaries were signed last night, and I trust will soon be followed by a Definitive Treaty of Peace, negotiated under the auspices of Marquis Cornwallis.

With many thanks for all your good things . . .

Lord Hugh Seymour

2 October, 1801.

. . . When I inform Your Lordship that I have not promoted one officer who was attached to my fortunes before I was placed at the head of this Board, nor my own nephew, commander

of the Stork sloop, Your Lordship will not be surprised at my conduct touching officers who return to England from foreign stations, while there are so many of great merit who have languished upon half-pay for several years.

The public letter will apprise you of the Preliminaries being signed, and another will be dispatched the moment they are ratified. The Definitive Treaty will be negotiated by Marquis Cornwallis, which gives great satisfaction to all parties.

I have great pleasure in learning that Your Lordship enjoys good health. . . .

Addington

22 October, 1801.

Lord Pelham and I called at your house on our way from the House of Lords, thinking it would be right to have a little conversation about the French troops, which Mr. Otto has given notice are soon to sail from Brest for St. Domingo, where in my judgment they should not go without passports from hence, and also the propriety of communicating our sending a squadron to Jamaica. . . .

Sir John Carter

30 October, 1801.

I am this instant informed by telegraph that Lord H. Seymour is no more, which I do most sincerely lament. . . .

Addington

2 November, 1801.

I fancy the King is not aware that there is a flag officer at Jamaica by His Majesty's empressment to have an able Admiral sent out forthwith. Upon the most serious reflection, Vice-Admiral Young appears to me the fittest man.

Vice-Admiral Young

3 November, 1801.

Circumstances have arisen which make a considerable augmentation of the naval force, now at Jamaica, necessary, and as the command has lately become vacant by the death of Lord Hugh Seymour, I have great pleasure in offering it to you : at the same time I wish you to understand that you are at full liberty to accept or decline, as may be most agreeable to you. . . .

(Marginal Note: Not sent.)

Addington

3 November, 1801.

Upon the most mature reflection, I believe it will be best to send Sir Thomas Duckworth to Jamaica, for he is not only a very experienced seaman, but has an accommodating temper and will not fall out with anyone.

Duckworth

19 November, 1801.

I cannot give you a stronger mark of my friendship and approbation of your services, than in recommending you to the King for the critical and important command at Jamaica. I have reason to believe that some of the captains of ships lately detached to reinforce the squadron in that island will from the state of their health wish to retire, Captain Foley in particular, about whom I am very much interested, and I lament exceedingly the necessity which occasioned the Elephant being one of the number. . . .

Duckworth

1 December, 1801.

Mr. Carthew, late Private Secretary to Mr. Pitt, will have the satisfaction of delivering this

letter to you. He has been appointed to the office of Collector of the Customs at Kingston, and I shall feel obliged by any attention you can pay to him. I understand from all persons who know Mr. Carthew that he is an amiable, sensible man.

Duckworth

16 January, 1802.

I have been extremely ill during the last two months, which has occasioned a chasm in our correspondence, and I am sorry in renewing it to have occasion to complain of an indelicacy towards me, as well as an informality, in your inclosing the acting order you gave to Captain Fielding (by my special desire) to Lord Winchelsea, which has put me under the necessity of repeating to His Lordship, that I had desired you to give him every possible advantage in obtaining the rank of post-captain by placing him in the first Admiralty vacancy, after the few I had intended should precede him were provided for. . . . It is to be wished that a little check should be put to the rage of returning from the West Indies: the late disorders among the seamen requiring that their officers should continue with them, unless their health positively requires change of climate.

I find the Board has highly disapproved the refusal of Captain Cole to receive money belonging to the Public, intended for the payment of troops, whereby a mutiny among them, or what is still worse, their being disbanded, might have been occasioned; and his promotion to the rank of post-captain is suspended. . . . Heartily hoping you and your son continue to enjoy perfect health . . .

Rear-Admiral Montagu

17 January, 1802.

I had great satisfaction in your letters of the 31st October and 1st November, which I should sooner have replied to, but for a long and serious illness with which I have been afflicted and am not yet entirely recovered from. The reforms you were engaged in at the date of your letters are very laudable, and were highly approved by the Board. Getting rid of the prisoners in any way appears very desirable, from the expense we incur here on that head: you must have eased the Public of a very heavy expense.

From the recent measures taken by France respecting her West India Colonies, it has been judged expedient to reinforce the Jamaica Squadron considerably, and Sir J. Duckworth is appointed to command it. I should otherwise have had great satisfaction in recommending you to His Majesty as a fit person to have succeeded Lord Hugh Seymour. I should be glad however to know, whether you are desirous to serve as Commander-in-Chief in the Leeward Islands during the first station of the Peace, Rear-Admiral Totty's appointment being temporary. . . .

Rt. Hon. Henry Dundas

Rochetts, 23 January, 1802.

I have long ago heard of a tarry substance floating on the surface of the lake in the island of Trinidad, but never understood that it had been applied to any use. Making every allowance for the sanguine turn of your correspondent, his information furnishes sufficient ground for a reservation to be made in this valuable article, and I will converse with Mr. Addington upon it the moment I return to town, from whence I

came some days ago with a view to obtain a little more strength, after the long illness I have gone through. . . .

Montagu

Rochetts, 24 January, 1802.

Your letter of the 6th December is evidently written under the impulse of the moment. I sincerely lament the loss of the two young men in whom you felt so tender an interest, but I entertain too high an opinion of your patriotism, judgment, and propriety to conceive it possible you should relinquish the command in the manner you throw out ; for there never was a more critical period than the present, as it relates to the station you are employed on, and the facility with which you accommodated the Captains Foley and Fremantle (for both [of] whom I have a sincere regard) has filled all your friends with astonishment ; for besides the very powerful force our late enemies have in the neighbouring island, the spirit of discontent will naturally arise among the seamen, when they see their officers abandoning the eminent situations they are placed in, which nothing short of actual disability to perform their duty can justify.

Confiding as I do in the rectitude of your mind, I sincerely hope a duty paramount to all personal feeling will operate against sudden and rash opinions, formed in a paroxysm of affliction, and that I shall never have cause to repent of having placed you in the most advantageous situation at my disposal.

Duckworth

12 February, 1802.

As I hope your health is improved, and the important command with which you are invested

may have occasioned a change in your wishes, I have not acted upon your letter signifying a desire to be relieved, but you may rest assured that when the service which occasioned your removal to Jamaica is at an end, a flag officer shall be sent out to relieve you in that command.

Major-General Simcoe

22 March, 1802.

I thank you very much for the copies of the harbours in St. Domingo, which Mr. Dalrymple will avail himself of in the charts compiling under his direction. The moment I can put my hand on your Puffendorf, which is deposited in a secure place, I will obey your commands respecting it.

Duckworth

Rochetts, 17 April, 1802.

In acknowledging your letters of the 10th of December, 20th January, and 19th February, I must decline entering into your reasoning upon the decisions of the Board in the several cases therein alluded to, which ought not to form a part of our correspondence. I am glad you have placed Captain Augustus Leveson-Gower in the vacancy occasioned by the ill-health of Captain Parker, and with many thanks for your good wishes, be assured I enter very feelingly into the description you give of the state of your mind touching Miss Duckworth's early passion, and lament most exceedingly that there is a stain in the reputation of Lieutenant Trelawney that will undoubtedly operate against the desire I feel to co-operate with you in promoting by any justifiable means, the happiness of your daughter.

THE PEACE TERMS

I. INTRODUCTION

THE Proclamation for the cessation of hostilities was issued on 12th October 1801. On the 13th Mr. Addington gave a dinner party in celebration of the event. Amongst those present were the Marquess Cornwallis, who had been nominated British delegate to the Congress at Amiens, Lord St. Vincent, General Lauriston, and M. Otto. The following day Lauriston returned to France. The *Moniteur*, 14th October 1801, contains an account of his reception in England, doubtless based upon his official letters. 'Citizen Lauriston took the earliest opportunity of waiting on Lord Hawkesbury, Lord St. Vincent, and Mr. Addington. He dined with Lord Hawkesbury. Mr. Addington observed to him: "This is not an ordinary Peace: it is a reconciliation between the two first Nations of the world!" Lord St. Vincent said to Citizen Lauriston "that he had immediately ordered packet boats to be dispatched to all quarters of the globe to cause hostilities to cease; that the least delay might occasion the death of multitudes of men; and that civilized Europe had suffered too much during this long war."' "

The negotiations at Amiens proved a longer business, however, than had at first appeared probable; and when the treaty at last arrived for ratification, it reached England at a moment when the Country quite believed we were drifting

once again to war. On the evening of Friday, 12th March, Cornwallis's messenger arrived ; St. Vincent had left town for a few days at Brentwood and was summoned back for the Cabinet meetings. On Sunday the King at Windsor approved the draft which Cornwallis proposed to sign, and this was forwarded to Amiens on Monday, the 15th. On Sunday, the 28th, M. Nettermann, one of Joseph Bonaparte's private secretaries, arrived from Amiens with the notification for M. Otto of the signature of peace, and on Monday morning, Mr. Moore, one of Cornwallis's secretaries, brought the official copy of the treaty. The *London Gazette Extraordinary* announced that the Peace Treaty had been signed at Amiens, on the afternoon of 27th March ; and London was illuminated in celebration of the event.

II. LETTERS

George Rose, Esq.

3 October, 1801.

. . . You, who know how necessary Peace is to us, will better know how to appreciate the Preliminary Articles, which Mr. Otto hopes he shall be justified in subscribing to. . . .

William Baker, Esq.

5 October, 1801.

. . . If the Preliminaries of Peace do not speak for themselves, no argument I can make use of will increase their value ; but I shall always consider it as the most fortunate event of my life, to have been the humblest instrument in promoting them.

Sir Philip Stephens, Bart.

5 October, 1801.

Many thanks for your obliging letter upon the signature of the Preliminaries, which I am proud of being an humble instrument in the attainment of. . . .

Earl of Uxbridge

12 October, 1801.

. . . I am bold to assert that the Peace is the very best this Country ever made, and I consider it as the happiest event of my life to have contributed to so great a blessing.

Thomas B. Bramston, Esq.

27 October, 1801.

. . . With the approbation of such characters as you, we have little to apprehend from the shafts of those who think no peace ought to have been made without the restoration of the House of Bourbon to the throne of France. . . .

General Bentinck

3 December, 1801.

I communicated your former letter to the Duke of Portland, Mr. Addington and Lord Hawkesbury, with observations which I felt due to you and to the Country. Lord H. desired to keep the letter and I was in hopes something would have arisen out of it. I thank you for the enclosure in your last, which gives a more favourable picture of the state of France than I have yet seen; all those I have conversed with, who have lately come from that Country, describe the Capital as the meridian of splendour and luxury, and the Provinces the very reverse; but France possesses such advantages in extent of territory, produce, coast

and climate, that under a tolerable Government she will soon recover her manufactures and commerce : the toughest piece of work will be the reduction of her Colonies to the slavish obedience necessary for the cultivation of them. . . .

Captain D'Auvergne, Prince of Bouillon

8 March, 1802.

A long and painful illness has hitherto prevented my answering your two last letters. In the present state of the negotiation with France, it is difficult for Lord Hawkesbury to introduce the subject of the succession, but I can with truth affirm he has the best dispositions towards you. I lament that my absence from town deprived me of the pleasure of seeing your brother when he was on this side.

RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED
STATES OF AMERICA



I. INTRODUCTION

THE international situation in Europe at the beginning of 1801 was such as to render the cultivation of a good understanding with the United States of America one of the aims of statesmen. The possibility of the United States joining the League of Neutrals had been a very likely and a very serious threat ; and, in writing to Nelson on 21st January, St. Vincent had stated his private information, which was, in effect, that the United States would join the League if Jefferson were elected President.

This pessimistic forecast was happily falsified. The election resulted in a tie between Jefferson and Burr. It was March before Jefferson ultimately became President, and the European situation changed so rapidly that by that time the moment had passed when an extremist outbreak across the Atlantic could constitute a serious menace.

Upon the first report of Jefferson having been elected President, *The Times*, 20th January 1801, commented on the possible effect of the election of one so notoriously hostile to this Country : ' The result is certainly unpleasant towards this Country, as Mr. Jefferson is the life and soul of the French faction in America.' Certainly, the Continental Powers were looking towards the States for assistance, and less than a month later the Czar of Russia was writing to the First Consul

suggesting measures for gaining the adherence of the United States to his maritime code.

The death of the Czar and the break-up of the Northern Coalition had taken place before Jefferson's Message to Congress reached Europe. 'American papers received,' says *The Times* of 20th May 1801, 'contain a Message from the President to the Congress, complaining of great depredations on the Commerce of the United States by British Cruizers. A number of instances are adduced. From the complexion of the official papers, which are published, on this subject, these complaints seem to be of a more serious nature than those we have hitherto had. . . .'

St. Vincent, in his letter to the American Minister at Lisbon, writes: 'It is no less my duty than disposition, to cultivate the good understanding so necessary to the happiness and prosperity of both our Countries'; and one tangible proof of the truth of this assertion was the Act of 2nd July 1801, 41 Geo. III, c. 96, 'For the better Regulation of His Majesty's Prize Courts in the West Indies and America, and for giving a more speedy and effectual Execution to the Decrees of the Lords Commissioners of Appeals.'

II. LETTERS

Hon. T. Erskine

13 March, 1801.

My first object on coming to this Board was to reform the Courts of Admiralty in the Colonies with a view to check the vexations which the American commerce has been subject to; and

Sir William Scott, who is to name the new appointments, has it now under consideration.

Mr. King is possibly not aware of the abuses which are committed by the American Consuls in France, Spain and Portugal, from the generality of whom any Englishman, the Consul knowing him to be such, may be made an American for a dollar. I have known more than one American Master carry off soldiers in their regimentals, arms and accoutrements from the garrison at Gibraltar, and there cannot be a doubt but the American trade is navigated by a majority of British subjects, and a considerable one, too! Thus it becomes a very difficult point to draw the line, and I have always considered this as the greatest evil arising from the separation.

I entertain a very high respect for the public and private character of Mr. King, and I prize your friendship still higher, and you may rest assured that whenever Lord Hawkesbury makes a communication to me on this subject, I will do everything, consistent with my duty to the Public, to cement the union between the two countries.

His Excellency Rufus King, Esq. 10 May, 1801.

Before I had the honour of receiving your letter of the 8th inst., an official report had been made by the captain of the Loire of the detention of the ship Benjamin Franklin, and directions had been given to inquire into the circumstances; from the result of which I have the satisfaction to find, that the Board of Admiralty has felt itself justified in recommending the immediate release of the ship, and a communication to that effect was sent to Portsmouth by yesterday's post.

I am not aware of any obstruction that can possibly be given to the commander of the Benjamin Franklin in the completion of the necessary provisions and stores for his voyage, but if any impediment of that sort should arise you may rely on my good offices in removing them and to testify to you how sincerely disposed I am to cultivate and improve a good understanding between the two countries, as well as the personal respect and esteem with which I have the honour to be, etc., etc.

William Smith, Esq. (American Minister at Lisbon)

10 May, 1801.

I am extremely concerned at the outrage that appears to have been committed by an officer and boat's crew of the Diana frigate, which I cannot more strongly mark my disapprobation of than by enclosing a copy of the answer¹ I made to the representation made by Mr. King on this subject.

I beg leave to assure you that it is no less my duty, than disposition, to cultivate the good understanding so necessary to the happiness and prosperity of both our Countries, and I shall embrace every opportunity to manifest the regard and esteem with which I have the honour to be, etc., etc.

Ralph Wormeley, Esq. (Rosegill, near Urbana, Virginia)

10 August, 1801.

I have received great pleasure from your obliging letter of the 5th of May, and I do assure

¹ Orders had been sent to Captain Stephenson, of Diana frigate, to report on the complaint that a lieutenant boarded and impressed men out of American vessels in the Tagus.

you that I have exerted every means in my power both before and since I came into office to put a stop to the vexations which the American navigation has been subjected to during the present war, and you probably have heard that while I commanded before Cadiz, I showed every possible attention to the subjects of the United States. I shall steadily persevere in this conduct, being perfectly convinced of the wise policy of bringing the two Countries as near together as their interests will admit.

His Excellency Rufus King, Esq.

[Query date—5 to 15 November, 1801.]

Whatever is done on account of the American vessels detained on account of their attempting to enter the Port of Havre must proceed from Lord Hawkesbury's office. His Lordship's ill-state of health and my own, with the press of business on our hands, have not permitted of our seeing Sir William Scott together, or some determination would have been come to on the subject.

I trust none of the vessels in question left America after the notice of the blockade arrived there ; because if they did, any interference of this or the Secretary of State's office will have no avail.

MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS

MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS

Sir Charles Saxton, Bart.

22 June, 1801.

The Marquis of Salisbury interests himself very much in favour of Mr. Livesay,¹ who is painting a large picture containing more than 5,000 figures ; but the Board, from the last sentence of your public letter, judged it expedient that he should be ordered to his duty. Should his nephew be capable of transacting his business to your satisfaction in his absence, and you see no objection to his asking and obtaining another leave of absence, I will thank you to advise him of the proper time to apply for it.

Marquis of Salisbury

26 June, 1802.

The vacation at the Academy being over, it is absolutely necessary that Mr. Livesay should repair to his post, from which the Board is not disposed to admit of his absence, unless he can provide an Instructor to the satisfaction of the Commissioner, that no injustice may be done to

¹ Richard Livesay was Drawing Master at the Royal Naval Academy, Portsmouth. Presumably he was at work on the picture for Lord Salisbury of the review of the Hertfordshire Volunteers by the King in Hatfield Park, 13th June 1800, which is mentioned in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

the young gentlemen under his care. It will therefore be advisable for him to repair to Portsmouth, and obtain the sanction of Mr. Saxton for his application.

Rt. Hon. Henry Addington

20 March, 1801.

I will punctually obey the commands of the Field-Marshal.

Would not this be a favourable moment to apply to the Government of France for a Passport for H.M. Ship Investigator¹ going out upon discovery ?

General Edward Smith

7 April, 1801.

I am rather inclined to believe there is an ample quantity of grain to meet the ensuing harvest, and from the quantity of plant in the ground there is every prospect of a continuance of plenty ; but how the Farmers, who from opulence are become monopolists, are to be dealt with, to bring down the price, the Legislature alone can decide on.

H.R.H. The Duke of York

13 April, 1801.

Lord St. Vincent has the honour to submit to the consideration of H.R.H. the Duke of York the schemes of pensioning the widows and children of sea officers slain in fight with the enemy, and of the widows of those who die a natural death.

¹ The Investigator (Captain Matthew Flinders) sailed in July for Australia. *The Times* notes, 27th June 1801, that her crew 'are distinguished by a glazed hat decorated with a globe, and the name of the ship in letters of gold.'

Earl Cholmondeley

19 May, 1801.

I return you many thanks for the perusal of Mr. Arbuthnot's letter, and I will thank Your Lordship to convey through him my acknowledgments to Dom Rodrigo de Souza Countinho and to assure Mr. A. that I will give the same opinion to the Board, when the claim of Consular Fees on the Transports comes officially before it, which I held when Mr. Goddard contended for them. Your Lordship well knows how difficult it is to extort money from the public purse on fair claims: although there have been instances of millions being yielded to commissaries, contractors, and the tribe of locusts which feed upon the blood of the Public, in times of exigency.

Samuel Barker, Esq.

6 August, 1801.

We cannot find a precedent on which to ground a compliance with the prayer of the Corporation of Yarmouth for the repair of the Pier: and the prevailing opinion of the Board is, that the great benefits received from the North Sea Fleet are an ample compensation for any injury the Jetty may have sustained.

Sir John Sinclair, Bart.

27 December, 1801.

Many thanks for your obliging attention in sending me your work on the Naval Strength of the British Empire. . . .

Viscount Duncan

18 January, 1802.

When the Portuguese Auxiliary Squadron was placed under my command, the Marquis of Niza put the very question to me Your Lordship has

done, and I gave it in favour of the Auxiliary Squadron, because the Neapolitan Squadron had shared Prize Money with ours, both during Lord Hotham's command and mine, and I had heard long ago that the Dutch Squadron while serving as our Auxiliaries in 1745 had been admitted to the same right or privilege; and finding that Sir Philip Stephens and other Members of the Board, with whom I have conversed upon the subject, since the receipt of your letter, agree with me in opinion, I do not lose a moment in apprising Your Lordship of it, to prevent an Appeal to the Admiralty, which, should it be made, will, as a matter of course, be referred to Sir John Nicholls and Dr. Battine.

Earl Poulett

17 May, 1802.

All the Marines who are not judged proper to retain for the Peace Establishment will be discharged immediately as a matter of course. Upon inquiry I learn that it is a maxim of this office not to direct the discharge of a marine without stipulating for his paying the expense of raising a recruit.

POST OFFICE PACKETS

Lord Auckland

30 March, 1801.

Many thanks to Your Lordship for apprising me of the attack I was to expect from my old friend Mr. Robinson. What a lamentable thing it is that Packets on which so very much depends should be commanded by Borough-mongers. I have given our friend a good dose upon this, wishing he may send it to his Constituents.

John Robinson, Esq.

30 March, 1801.

I certainly had no intention to run foul of your patronage when I applied to Lord Auckland to give Mr. Stewart, Master of the *Ville de Paris*, the command of a Packet. The thing is done—and cannot be undone. While on this subject, I cannot but lament most exceedingly that Borough influence should ever be exercised in such very important concerns as the navigation of Packets. No wonder that so many of them have failed in their duty, and been captured in the most disgraceful and ignominious manner. Mr. Stewart will set such an example as must, I think, produce some amendment in the conduct of your Harwich men.

BOMBAY SHIPBUILDING

Rt. Hon. Henry Dundas

14 July, 1801.

Many thanks for your obliging letter of the 9th and the enclosure, from which many useful hints may be extracted. I have had a conversation with Sir Francis Baring upon the subject since you left town, and he is clearly of opinion that the Directors will throw no obstacle in the way of a contract for building ships of war at Bombay, freighting them with cotton thence to England. Furthermore I did not press him, wishing to avoid anything that might obstruct a measure fraught with so much benefit to the Country. . . . Shall I send the Papers back to you, or deliver them to any person in town?

Dundas

2 May, 1802.

. . . At your leisure I shall be very thankful for your ideas upon building ships for the navy

at Bombay, which I should prefer receiving on paper because my long illness has impaired my memory.

CIVIL APPOINTMENTS

Doctor Fidge

4 March, 1801.

You must see the impossibility of my making any alteration in a system introduced by my predecessor in office, who, public opinion declares, was the justest and ablest man that ever presided at this Board. All I can do is to remove you to a more eligible situation when a vacancy occurs.

Earl of Salisbury

25 March, 1801.

You made me a distinct and positive promise, when your Regiment was encamped on Warley Common, that John Smith, my old shipmate and apprentice, should fill the first vacancy of King's Waterman. I therefore enclose a letter I have this moment received from him. . . .

Thomas Parlby, Esq.

26 March, 1801.

Believe me your son had much better remain an assistant in the conduct of your business than seek an employment under government, for it is my fixed determination to fill all vacant offices with the most efficient men I can find, and to pay no regard to the recommendations of any person whatever, where the qualification of the candidate will not bear me out in the appointment. Meritorious clerks in office will have the first-fruits, and admirals' secretaries and pursers the next. As the Father of the Service I cannot travel out of this record, except in very extraordinary cases. . . .

Marquis Townshend

25 April, 1801.

Nothing would give me greater pleasure than complying with any wish of Your Lordship's, more especially when it relates to an officer of such uncommon merit as Colonel Congreve. There are already two or three candidates who have been encouraged to expect attention, therefore any prospect of Mr. Congreve succeeding in this department must be distant, unless his qualifications render him more fit for the employment than the rest: at the same time he must understand, that as a clerk the chief qualification is writing a very good hand, without which, whatever his other endowments may be, he will be considered ineligible.

H.R.H. The Duke of Clarence

7 May, 1801.

Ever since I was placed in my present situation I have had Mr. Whitehead¹ in contemplation, knowing the interest Your Royal Highness has always taken about him, and lost no time in making inquiry as to his capacity to fill an efficient employment in one of His Majesty's Dockyards. It is therefore very painful to me to have to state to Your Royal Highness that, although all the persons in the Transport Board agree with me that a more amiable or virtuous man does not exist, yet no one who is, or has been, a member of that Board, will say that he is by any means capable of fulfilling the duties of his present employment. This being unfortunately the case, I fear it will not be in my power to appoint him

¹ Alexander Whitehead, Secretary to the Commissioners of Transport.

a Clerk of the Checque of a Dock Yard, as under the new Regulation a person filling that office ought to possess a degree of precision and energy not to be found in Mr. Whitehead, and without these endowments the corruptions and abuses, which are very much to be attributed to that department, never can be rooted out.

Lord Clifford

19 May, 1801.

There are objections which I was not aware of to allowing a fixed stipend to the Catholic Clergy who perform the duties Mr. Flinn has so worthily been employed in at the three principal sea-ports, but I will take care that his compensation is equal to the others.

Lord Wycombe

6 June, 1801.

I cannot express the obligation I feel to Your Lordship for the communication of Dr. Currie's letter, which I return. This Board has directed a flag officer to take to his assistance a Commissioner of the Sick and Wounded Board, and one from the Transport Board, and investigate the prisons at Portchester Castle and Plymouth, with the hospitals attached to them; and I am concerned to state that great abuses were reported to exist in the supplies of bread and meat under the contracts, but it has not appeared from the reports of these gentlemen that the quantity of food allowed by government is insufficient for the sustenance of persons who are not required to labour. Both these Reports and others, made under direction of the late Board, describe the miseries of the prisoners to have arisen from vice

and thirst for tobacco, and quote many instances of men paying out of their rations losses at play, and disposing of their clothes and food for tobacco—evils that the officers appointed to superintend these establishments have not yet been able to suppress. These gentlemen received their appointments from my predecessor and seem to be well chosen. A letter I have this instant received from a very worthy man, who has the care of the sick at Norman Cross, will in some degree confirm what I have written to Your Lordship, and I do assure you that much of my time has been occupied in endeavouring to mitigate the sufferings of those poor fellows, in whose cause you are so laudably interested.

Marquis Townshend

14 June, 1801.

The employments in my nomination are of the most efficient kind, and can only be filled by men qualified for them. It would be ruin to any person to become a purser without a regular training, and which late Regulations of the Admiralty require. Naval Agency forms no part of the patronage, and the Dock Yard offices must be filled by men who have served in the Civil Departments of the Navy at sea, or in the public offices attached to it, so that there is no appointment in the gift of the Admiralty adapted to Mr. Joynes: and in truth there are so many men of uncommon merit of the profession, who are justly entitled to the few things that fall, I cannot without a departure from what is due to them travel out of the record—otherwise the respect I entertain for Your Lordship and for Colonel Bloomfield would prompt me to pay every possible attention to Mr. Joynes.

Colonel Bastard

18 June, 1801.

. . . It will be of essential use to obtain the names of all the artificers, etc., who have subscribed to the support of Sprys and Wedlake, and of those who meditate a trip to France. The personal communication you have had with the man in question is one among many proofs of your zeal and activity in the service of your Country, for nothing can be of greater benefit to it than defeating the machinations of these evil spirits.

Commissioner Saxton, etc.

20 July, 1801.

Anxiously desirous as I am to put the Dock Yards upon the best possible footing, the first measure and the most important is to appoint the most capable men in all respects to the employments of Master Shipwrights, without attention to seniority or influence of any kind ; and having heard the most favourable report of those now at Portsmouth Yard, I feel much disposed to prefer them. Pretensions are set up in favour of Mr. Nelson of Deptford Yard, because he is senior, which, unless his merits are of a superior kind, I cannot admit a justifiable plea ; this latter person, as well as Mr. Polhill, has served under your eye, and I will thank you for your undisguised opinion upon their respective merits, being well aware how difficult it is to obtain a precise knowledge of the real abilities and fitness of men to fill very responsible situations from those under whom they have been educated.

Rear-Admiral Payne

18 September, 1801.

When H.R.H. the Duke of Kent honoured me with a call on the subject of the employment held

by Mr. Rashleigh, it was improper for me to do less than express a disposition to attend to any reasonable wishes of H.R.H. ; but H.R.H. must have very much mistaken my meaning, if he understood that my acquiescence or refusal rested on the proposal of Mr. Rainsforth's executing the duty of the office by deputy, instead of performing it in person. This office is one of the very few that a First Lord of the Admiralty has it in his power to dispose of to a private friend, and you must, my dear Admiral, suppose that I cannot have passed my grand climacteric without having some person of that description looking up to me.

If Mr. Rainsforth had any claim on the naval service I should perhaps have felt the propriety of giving way in the gratification of any private views to favour the wishes of his H.R.H., but Mr. Rainsforth is not a person under such circumstances ; and, besides, it is not a seemly thing to place a gentleman who has contrived to get rid of a handsome fortune and who, it may reasonably be supposed, is not a man of business, to execute the duties of the office, with advantage to the public.

From what I have already said, you will readily see the difficulty I feel in declining to accede to any arrangement proposed to me by the Prince of Wales, and in the attainment of which the Duke of Kent seems to be so much interested ; and I must rely on your friendship in bringing the subject before their Royal Highnesses in such a way as may shelter me from their displeasure, if I should, when the vacancy happens, be reduced to the necessity of disobeying their commands.

The allowing Mr. Rashleigh to resign in favour

of any person must be totally out of the question. If I was once to admit that principle, and to form a precedent, no matter under what circumstances, it would be attended with a degree of embarrassment not easily to be thrown off.

I beg to present my humble duty to the Prince, and to assure H.R.H. that I feel great satisfaction in learning that he is not likely to experience any ill effects from the accident he has met with.

Commissioner Coffin

22 September, 1801.

I dine with Mr. Addington to-morrow and will take that opportunity to state your brother's case, as far as I am able, from your letter and your sister's, for the Red Book does not show the office held by Mr. Wanton.

Mr. Addington is such a lover of justice, that unless he has entered into an engagement, I am sure he will listen to my story ; but such a sharp look-out is kept by the High Personages in question, and they are so importunate, it is very difficult to contend with them.

Geo. Rogers, Esq.

14 October, 1801.

The letter which the Comptroller of the Navy delivered to me yesterday from you, wherein you have desired to be superannuated, was accompanied by a letter from him, representing ' that your conduct in regard to your private affairs, and several recent transactions which have lately been the public talk,¹ appears to the other Members

¹ According to *The Times*, 21st November 1801, Rogers was a partner in the London and Dublin Union Bank, Portland Place. The affairs of the Bank were under investigation.

of the Board in so reprehensible a light that in their opinion you ought not to continue a Member of a Board of such trust and responsibility, and of so much importance to the public,' and requesting that steps might be taken for your removal.

Under other circumstances it would have been matter for consideration whether, from the state of your mental or bodily infirmities, it would have been proper to allow you to retire from your situation at the Navy Board with a suitable provision for your future support ; but after so serious a charge has been exhibited against you by your colleagues, against which I fear it is impossible for you to justify yourself, I feel myself under the painful necessity of informing you that I cannot, consistently with my public duty, represent your case in such a light as may be likely to induce His Majesty to order that provision to be made for your future support and maintenance which has been given to persons in your situation who have retired under different circumstances.

Rev. George Smith

16 February, 1802.

The moment your letter reached me, I made inquiry into the complaint set forth in it, and I am very sorry to find there is so much to blame in a department connected with this office.

I enclose a report made by Mr. Beddingfield, the Inspector of Seamen's Wills, and I have referred the whole to the Treasurer of the Navy, who will use the proper means to prevent unnecessary delays in these proceedings.

[Mr. Beddingfield]

21 February, 1802.

Lord St. Vincent is very much distressed by the frequent complaints he receives of delays in the payment of what is due to the widows and mothers of deceased seamen—one of which is enclosed, and he relies on the zeal and activity of Mr. Beddingfield to put an end to the cause, with all possible despatch.

PROMOTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

I. INTRODUCTION

THE policy of the First Lord in regard to the promotion of officers is made sufficiently plain in the selection from his letters which follows. Shortly after his taking office, there appeared a Press notice, which is reproduced in *The Times* of 6th March 1801, and the *Naval Chronicle*, v. 268 :

The Earl of St. Vincent has refused every application that has been made to him for promotion by young Captains, or others newly appointed : having declared his intention of giving the preference to all those persons of whom he has an opinion, who have been the longest on the Half-pay List. The system is undoubtedly just and highly honourable to him : but if the Noble Lord can pursue such a rigorous and impartial line of conduct for a long continuance, it will be more than any of his Predecessors have been able to accomplish.

The biographies of many distinguished officers confirm the difficulty of obtaining employment from the Half-pay List, and a passage from the Memoir of Admiral Sir Jahleel Brenton may be quoted in this connexion. It was just before Brenton's appointment to the *Cæsar* as Flag Captain to Sir James Saumarez. Brenton was 'well aware of the difficulty which existed in England of getting employed from half-pay ; that it was only those that were in the stream

that were carried along with it ; whilst many officers, who had gained their promotion by a succession of gallant achievements, were passing their days in helpless indolence. They had got into the eddy, and had the mortification of seeing those whom they had left far behind, bringing up the breeze, and passing by them. This was particularly the case with the greater part of the First Lieutenants of line-of-battle ships, promoted after general actions. They had received the rank of Commander with the delight so natural to the attainment of such a step ; but, wanting interest to obtain a command, they were soon forgotten, and many had to regret that they had gained their promotion.'

The Service therefore felt that, in St. Vincent's appointment, the First Lord's patronage would be exercised 'with more knowledge of the character and ability of the officers,' to quote Collingwood's phrase, than had been the case with his predecessors.

A certain number of promotions for distinguished service were gained in the course of what was probably the most brilliant year of the war, and one of these was the promotion of Lord Cochrane, to which much space and little gratitude are devoted in 'The Autobiography of a Seaman.'

The signing of peace was signalled by a general promotion, in accordance with the precedents of past wars, but no promotions were made to the flag list and very few to the list of lieutenants, which already totalled over 2300 names. About 100 promotions were made to Post-Captain and the same to Commander ; a large number of these were haul-down promotions, in accordance with the custom of the Service.

* * * * *

Circumstances combined to afford St. Vincent few opportunities for effecting changes in regard to flag appointments. Practically every flag command had only recently been filled, and few fresh openings offered.

Whilst St. Vincent was on sick leave, during the autumn of 1799, he had been approached by the Cabinet on the possibility of his conducting conjoint operations with Sir Charles Grey against Brest, which would entail his succeeding Lord Bridport as Commander-in-Chief of the Channel Fleet. The *Naval Magazine* of November 1799 noted : 'The following arrangements are spoken of as likely to take place : that Earl St. Vincent is to command the Channel Fleet ; the Hon. Admiral Cornwallis to be second in command ; Lord Keith, to be Commander-in-Chief, Mediterranean ; Sir Richard Bickerton, who is at present second-in-command at Portsmouth, to be appointed to some foreign station ; and Admiral Dacres to succeed Sir Richard Bickerton.'

The proposed operations did not materialise, however, and the rumoured appointments did not take place.

In April 1800, when very definite indications were being received of the intention of the Brest fleet to put to sea, Bridport unexpectedly brought the Channel Fleet into port. 'Everybody is much astonished,' wrote Grenville to Buckingham (10th April 1801) ; and a week later acquainted him that 'Lord St. Vincent is to take the Channel Fleet ; Sir H. Parker comes home to it, and is succeeded by Lord Hugh ; Nelson goes on well with Keith, and remains in the Mediterranean.'

The announcement of St. Vincent's appointment, communicated under date 24th April 1800, was accompanied by other changes. In the

North Sea Lord Duncan struck his flag, and Vice-Admiral Archibald Dickson, second-in-command, succeeded as Commander-in-Chief. The appointment of Cornwallis as second-in-command in the Channel Fleet, foreshadowed in November 1799, did not take place, however. Sir Hyde Parker, Commander-in-Chief at Jamaica, was nominated to the Channel; Lord Hugh Seymour, from the Leeward Islands, succeeded Parker at Jamaica; and Duckworth, from off Cadiz, succeeded Seymour as Commander-in-Chief, Leeward Islands. Bickerton succeeded Duckworth off Cadiz; but later, in consequence of the indiscretions of Sir Sidney Smith and the opening of the Egyptian campaign, Bickerton was moved to the Levant and superseded Smith there; on 21st November 1800 Sir John Warren hoisted his flag in the *Renown* at Plymouth and sailed to take over Bickerton's command off Cadiz.

In the Mediterranean Keith now became Commander-in-Chief, having previously held acting command only, whilst St. Vincent was in England on sick leave. Nelson, it was thought, would not long remain under Keith; and, not unexpectedly, Grenville wrote on 10th May 1800 that he was coming home.

On the North American Station Vice-Admiral Sir William Parker, the new Commander-in-Chief, succeeded Vandeput, whose death had just been announced; whilst Rear-Admiral Pole, who had been Bridport's Captain of the Fleet, was nominated to the Newfoundland command, it being the desire of St. Vincent to have Commodore Troubridge from the Mediterranean as his Captain of the Fleet, in the Channel Fleet.

These far-reaching changes had a rather disturbing effect in the Channel Fleet. Sir Alan

Gardner, Bridport's second-in-command, had been ordered back off Brest immediately it was known that Bridport had brought the fleet in. When St. Vincent unexpectedly arrived in the fleet and took command, and it became known that Hyde Parker, who was senior to Gardner, was nominated as second-in-command, all the flag officers found themselves depressed in standing, Gardner sinking to third place when he might have expected the offer of the chief command, as Bridport had received when Howe retired, and Dickson was receiving on Duncan's retirement in the North Sea. A painful situation was created, ending in St. Vincent's having to request the First Lord either to supersede him or to remove Gardner from the Channel Fleet. Gardner, in consequence, returned to port; and, a vacancy being created for him at Cork, he struck his flag on 22nd August; in November he took up the Irish Command. Kingsmill, who had made way for him, was created a Baronet, and Gardner obtained a Peerage.

The Vice-Admirals remaining in the Channel Fleet were Sir Henry Harvey and Sir Andrew Mitchell; meanwhile Sir Hyde Parker, who was senior to both, was returning from the West Indies, and Lord Nelson, who was their junior, was on his way back from the Mediterranean. On 8th September St. Vincent wrote to Spencer relative to Harvey's ill-health, adding: 'I think Lord Nelson will wish to serve in this Squadron, and I shall be very glad to have him'; whilst a month earlier he had proposed Sir Andrew Mitchell for the North Sea operations, should the Baltic Powers proceed to hostilities. Mitchell had already had considerable experience both of the North Sea and of conjoint operations

there, having the year before had charge of the expedition of the Duke of York and Abercromby to Holland.

With the approach of winter, St. Vincent received permission to reside on shore at Tor Abbey; Harvey's health necessitated sick leave; and in consequence Mitchell took the fleet to sea until Sir Hyde Parker, who had arrived in England in September, should be ready to take over. This was not until the middle of November, and shortly afterwards the Admiralty announced a further set of appointments. Admiral Rainier, Commander-in-Chief, East Indies, was to be relieved by Sir Roger Curtis, Commander-in-Chief, Cape; Curtis at the Cape was to be succeeded by Admiral Gambier from the Board of Admiralty; and Rear-Admiral Whitshed in the Channel Fleet was nominated to the vacant seat at the Board.

On 1st January 1801 the special promotion of flag officers, to celebrate the Union of Great Britain and Ireland, brought about a certain number of changes: in particular, two able captains in the Channel Fleet, Thomas Graves and Totty, attained flag rank, necessitating their giving up their ships and coming on shore. Meanwhile, the commands in the North Sea Fleet had been discussed, and Nelson's name mentioned. '... They never can intend to place Your Lordship under the command of Vice-Admiral Dickson,' wrote St. Vincent to Nelson, 15th December 1800; 'and in case of a great fleet acting in the Baltic, Sir Hyde Parker, who is in possession of all the information acquired during the last preparation for a Russian war, must, I conceive, be appointed to the command of it.' In this sense St. Vincent had already written to the Admiralty: 'Should the Northern Powers con-

tinue this menacing posture, Sir Hyde Parker is the only man you have to face them. He is in possession of all the information obtained during the Russian Armament, more particularly that which relates to the navigation of the Great Belt.' ¹

In consequence of St. Vincent's recommendations, Sir Hyde Parker was withdrawn from the Channel Fleet and proceeded to town for consultation with the Cabinet. Later, Nelson was called upon; but the state of negotiations did not warrant any public announcement of their appointments, and their nominations were treated as confidential. During this period of waiting, Sir Hyde Parker married the daughter of Admiral Onslow, a wife forty-three years his junior. Meanwhile the sea-going command of the Channel Fleet devolved again on Sir Henry Harvey upon his return from sick leave.

The Baltic appointments were made known in the Fleet on the 16th January 1801, but were not communicated to the Press until 27th January, when the appointments of Hyde Parker as Commander-in-Chief, with Domett as First Captain, and Nelson as second-in-command, were announced. A third flag officer was nominated—Rear-Admiral Sir W. G. Fairfax, who had been Duncan's Flag Captain at the Battle of Camperdown in 1797, and had attained his flag on the occasion of the recent general promotion.

When, therefore, the new Board of Admiralty took office in February, St. Vincent found himself unable to offer the slightest hope of employment to the many flag officers who had failed to find favour in the sight of Lord Spencer, and who

¹ St. Vincent to Spencer, 7th December 1800.

hoped for recognition from the new First Lord, to whom they were more intimately known.

* * * * *

The change of Boards displaced three Sea Lords, all holding the rank of Vice-Admiral—James Gambier, William Young, and Robert Man. At the same time, a certain liability had been incurred in regard to Rear-Admiral Hawkins Whitshed, who had been nominated to the Board by Spencer in anticipation of a vacancy on Gambier's going afloat.

Gambier now hoisted his flag in the *Neptune* and joined the Channel Fleet. 'The Earl of St. Vincent testified in the most handsome terms his regret to Admiral Gambier in being deprived of his services at the Board,' says *The Times* of 25th February 1801; 'and gave him his option of the station where he would most wish to be employed.'

Young was nominated to the first vacancy which occurred during St. Vincent's term of office—the command at Jamaica, vacant on the death of Lord Hugh Seymour. However, for reasons which are explained by the First Lord in his letter of 3rd November 1801 to the Prime Minister, the nomination was cancelled.

Man, who had returned from the Mediterranean in ill-health just prior to St. Vincent's action of 14th February 1797, and had joined the Board in September 1798, now went on half-pay.

Hawkins Whitshed, whose nomination to the Board had been cancelled by the change, continued on in the Channel Fleet, and in July asked for and obtained the command on the North America Station, vacant by the recall of Vice-Admiral Sir William Parker. Whitshed's

appointment was announced in September, but it was approved for him to await the spring before taking up his command.

The command at Newfoundland also remained without a flag officer, owing to the employment of Vice-Admiral Pole first in the Baltic, and later off Cadiz. The appointment, which was kept open for him, was offered temporarily to Gambier, with the chance of succession. Gambier refused it under those conditions, but accepted it the following year.

Meanwhile, the return of Admiral Rainier from the East Indies was suspended, doubtless to enable him to carry through the operations he had charge of in the East Indies and in the support of the Egyptian campaign. In June 1801 Lord Radstock was nominated to succeed him, but although Radstock hoisted his flag in October, the end of the war did away with the opportunity of employing a Vice-Admiral in East Indian waters, and with the end of the year Radstock's flag was struck in the *Theseus* and he resigned his appointment.

In the Baltic Fleet the appointment of Rear-Admiral Fairfax as third flag officer, which had been foreshadowed in the Press during the last days of Spencer's Board, failed to take place. Instead, Rear-Admirals Graves and Totty hoisted their flags, both of them having been strongly recommended for employment by St. Vincent, whilst still commanding the Channel Fleet. The *Naval Chronicle* for July 1801, in the course of a biographical sketch of Sir George Fairfax, mentions the 'ill-founded' rumours of his intended employment in the Baltic Fleet; and it would appear, from St. Vincent's letter to him of 21st December 1801, that Fairfax had the

misfortune to incur the First Lord's censure. He was not employed again.

Upon the return of the Baltic Fleet, Totty was appointed Commander-in-Chief, Leeward Islands, in succession to Duckworth, who succeeded to the Jamaica command. He did not long survive, however, succumbing to yellow fever on 2nd June 1802. Graves, whose health had also suffered, retired from active service on the return of peace.

The command of the Channel Fleet was offered to, and accepted by, Cornwallis; and upon that appointment much speculation could be offered. As has been noted, the appointment of Cornwallis as second-in-command to St. Vincent had been foreshadowed in 1799, but had never taken place. Instead, Sir Hyde Parker had been brought from the West Indies; Nelson later came to the conclusion that the appointment was not very welcome to the Commander-in-Chief. St. Vincent strongly recommended Hyde Parker to command the Baltic Fleet; but, after serving with him for a short time, Nelson wrote: 'I guess that Lord St. Vincent recommended Sir Hyde Parker in the strongest manner, because he wanted to get rid of him.'

In that guess Nelson was probably wrong. Sir Hyde Parker had been First Captain to Lord Hood in 1791, when the preparations for a Baltic Expedition had been gone into, in anticipation of war with Russia, and was doubtless not only the best-informed flag officer on the subject, but probably the only one with that knowledge. For the same reason it was highly inexpedient to withdraw him from the Baltic command just at the moment of sailing, in order that he should succeed to the Channel Fleet, as he was entitled

to do upon St. Vincent's preferment. There were undoubtedly good reasons for the appointment of Cornwallis, but, whatever channel of communication was employed to bring him into service once again, no letters on the subject appear in the Letter Books.

II. LETTERS

CORK

Lord Viscount Garlies

30 March, 1801.

. . . I rejoice most exceedingly that Lord Gardner is reconciled to his command. No man is more interested in his happiness than I am; I cannot give a better proof of it than having appointed his son to the command of the Lion a very short time after I took my seat at this Board. . . .

Admiral Lord Gardner

23 April, 1801.

Your Lordship's letter of the 17th instant has relieved me from a long and painful inquietude.

I felt it an indispensable duty to show every mark of respect and attention to Lady Gardner and to give early employment to Captain Francis Gardner in the way most suitable to his rank and ambition, and I will pay due regard to your recommendation of Mr. Burchall for a commission in the Marines: a long list, presented to the King by my predecessor, must necessarily be disposed of before I can approach His Majesty with mine.

I rejoice in the good account you give of the state of your health, and the satisfaction expressed by Your Lordship upon the subject of your command ; and I beg leave to assure you that I number amongst the happiest events of my life the renewal of a friendship which so long subsisted between Your Lordship and [myself]. . . .

Gardner

15 June, 1801.

I fear the disposition to mutiny among the seamen of the fleet will never be eradicated. Your Lordship has acted with great judgment upon what happened in the Glenmore. From the little I have seen of Captain Talbot, I incline to entertain a very favourable opinion of him, and I have always understood that Captain Duff, with whom I am less acquainted, is a very valuable officer ; but the different modes in which the officers of this day conduct the discipline of the people under their command does occasion much uneasiness on a change of captains.

I am very happy to learn that Your Lordship is in the enjoyment of perfect good health, for the continuance of which, and of every other happiness, you have [my] fervent wishes.

Gardner

[? 30 April, 1802.]

. . . As there is no longer occasion for your services at Cork, you will in all probability receive orders by this post to proceed to Spithead. I beg leave to express the sense I feel of the zeal and judgment you have shown in the discharge of your duty on that important station. . . .

Gardner

14 May, 1802.

. . . I regret it is not in my power to accomplish your wishes either at Portsmouth or Plymouth, as circumstances will not admit of an officer of Your Lordship's rank being appointed to command at either of those ports during peace.

PLYMOUTH

Mrs. Dacres

19 February, 1801.

I am not overpleased with your letter, for after the solid proofs I have given of my attachment to your family, you ought not to have doubted my good intentions in favour of your husband¹ and son. There is also much due to many other friends. I will make neither *professions* nor *promises*—let my deeds show.

Admiral Sir Richard Onslow, Bart. 20 March, 1801.

To my great surprise, I find you have anticipated, by one year exactly, the time of relieving Sir Thomas Pasley. Having been abroad at the time of his appointment, I relied on your accuracy. The mistake will not, I hope, have subjected you to great inconvenience.

¹ Rear-Admiral James Richard Dacres was appointed second flag officer at Plymouth, 29th April 1801, under Admiral Sir Thomas Pasley.

His son, Barrington Dacres, was in command of the Bull Dog, in the Mediterranean. A little after this he was captured, and, writing to his father, St. Vincent says: 'I have no doubt of my young friend acquitting himself honourably, in which event Mrs. Dacres and you may rest assured the *fortune de la guerre* will not operate to his disadvantage with [me].'

Rear-Admiral Dacres

23 April, 1801.

I have great pleasure in communicating to you that the Board has come to a resolution to employ an additional flag officer at Plymouth, and one at Chatham, and that you have the choice of either ; but if you prefer the former, the condition of the obligation is, that you remove from Weard to Dock or Stonehouse, for the port duty will not admit of your sleeping for one night from one of the last-mentioned places without leave from this Board. As I see very little prospect of an opening on any foreign station, and the Channel Fleet is so overdone with flag officers, should this proposition not suit your convenience and feelings, I must request of you not to entertain sanguine hope of my being able to make you another.

Dacres

3 May, 1801.

Your letter reminds me of my old constituents at Yarmouth, who, the moment I did them an act of great kindness, applied for another ; and I cannot forbear telling you, frankly, that I am not a little disgusted with the repeated assumptions I have received from your house. The merits of other flag officers cannot possibly be laid aside for your sole aggrandizement.

EAST INDIES**William Hanbury, Esq.**

23 May, 1801.

We have no ship going to the East Indies, excepting the *Theseus*, appointed for the flag of Vice-Admiral Lord Radstock. . . .

T. W. Bramston, Esq.

18 June, 1801.

Lord Radstock seems to have forgot that the appointment of flag lieutenant to the Theseus is reserved for a relation of Mr. Rose's, late of the Treasury. . . .

Lieut.-General Shirreff

26 October, 1801.

The appointment of Lord Radstock has been so long in contemplation that His Lordship is very much overloaded by me and others with recommendations. I therefore cannot advise your son¹ continuing in India with a view to his promotion, but if you approve of his coming to England, I will do the best I can for him upon some other station. Say everything respectful for me to Mrs. and Miss Shirreff, and kind to Winthorp.

Lord Radstock

13 November, 1801.

It's an ill wind that blows nobody good. Get rid of your youngsters and commissions for Madeira, which will relieve you from much inconvenience and anxiety.

Radstock

Langtons, 7 December, 1801.

It cannot be unknown to Your Lordship that I was ordered out of town by my physician as the only chance of preserving my life, and that if I did not abstain from all manner of business, even conversation, it was not probable I should recover. I therefore take extremely unkind your

¹ (Rear-Admiral) William Henry Shirreff, d. 1847.

pressing to come down hither, the more so as I have declined seeing any of my neighbours or friends.

Radstock

Langtons, 13 December, 1801.

I believe the proper mode for Your Lordship to pursue is to address a letter to the Secretary of the Admiralty, desiring permission to haul down your flag and come ashore, assigning or not the reason for your so doing. . . .

HALIFAX AND NEWFOUNDLAND

Rear-Admiral Holloway

14 May, 1801.

It is intended to reduce the squadron at Halifax to so small a size, that Captain Douglas of the *Boston* is thought a fit person, and of sufficient rank, to command it.

Rear-Admiral Thomas

3 June, 1801.

. . . The Halifax station is so reduced in number of ships that it will not bear a flag officer. Whenever it does, I must necessarily give that, and every other chief command, to Admirals who have had a considerable share in the successes of this war.

Rear-Admiral Whitshed

8 July, 1801.

Although it had not been in the contemplation of the Board to appoint a flag officer to command the small squadron on the coast of North America, now I am in possession of your wishes upon the subject of it, I will do my utmost to accomplish them.

Rear-Admiral Sir E. Gower 31 August, 1801.

No flag officer will be sent to Newfoundland this season, and Vice-Admiral Pole will have the option of resuming the command next year: should he decline it, a Vice-Admiral now serving in the Channel Fleet is nominated to succeed him.

Vice-Admiral Pringle 16 September, 1801.

Vice-Admiral Pole is employed upon a temporary service and his former command kept open for him. It was offered to Vice-Admiral Gambier, for this year with the chance of succession, which he declined, and Captain Barton¹ has a commission as Lieutenant-Governor. . . .

Admiral Wolseley 22 October, 1801.

The command of Newfoundland is disposed of. . . .

ADMIRALS UNEMPLOYED

Vice-Admiral Bazeley 18 February, 1801.

Lord Spencer has filled up every opening for the employment of flag officers, insomuch I cannot hold out the smallest encouragement to any one of my numerous friends upon that list.

Rear-Admiral McDouall 18 February, 1801.

. . . All the commands are so overwhelmed with Admirals, there is not an opening left for

¹ Of H.M.S. *Concorde*.

me in that branch of patronage, insomuch I cannot give the smallest encouragement to any of my friends on the list of flag officers to expect employment during the war, unless its duration should be much longer than I trust it will.

Vice-Admiral Dod

22 February, 1801.

Lord Spencer has not left a crevice to employ a flag officer of your rank in. . . .

Admiral Cumming

11 April, 1801.

Sir John Colpoys was appointed to succeed the late Mr. Thornton Astle¹ the day his death was announced to the Board, and Sir Thomas Troubridge and Captain Markham are candidates. Your name is inserted upon the list and I am ready to admit that your rank in the Navy and residence at Greenwich entitle you to the consideration of, etc., etc.

Vice-Admiral Man

5 October, 1801.

I was very happy to comply with your wishes conveyed through our common friend, Sir T. Troubridge. . . . Lady St. Vincent is at Fulham or would join in every kind wish to Mrs. Man and yourself . . . etc.

Sir John Colpoys

6 October, 1801.

Although in disobedience to your injunctions, I cannot deny myself the pleasure of replying to your letter of the 9th. Have the goodness to let

¹ A Director of Greenwich Hospital.

me know where you wish to serve¹; I conclude not abroad during a peace if we are so fortunate under the auspices of Lord Cornwallis to succeed in negotiating a Definitive Treaty.

Remember me kindly to Lord Ducie and be assured I am, etc., etc.

Rear-Admiral Sir William George Fairfax

Rochetts, 21 December, 1801.

It is new to me that an officer of His Majesty's Navy should entertain an idea of applying to any other quarter than the Admiralty for the reward of his services.

VARIOUS

Sir John Carter

17 February, 1801.

. . . The circumstances of the war, and numerous connexions of the Spencer Family, have contributed to swell the list of post-captains and commanders to an enormous size, insomuch I have determined not to promote to those ranks, except in cases of extraordinary merit and service, until the worthy on half-pay are provided for; but I am open to your recommendations of good men to fill employment below these ranks.

Lord Curzon

17 February, 1801.

The great number of commanders and post-captains of meritorious character now upon

¹ St. Vincent had the greatest respect for Sir John Colpoys, of whom he had written to Spencer, 16th August 1800, 'For obvious reasons [Colpoys] cannot be brought forth at this time, but must command the Fleet of England, if we have another war while he is fit for service.'

half-pay, and anxiously solicitous to be employed, has determined me to make no promotion, except in cases of extraordinary and distinguished services, until the whole are provided for, or I would with the greatest pleasure bring forward Mr. Bromley.¹

Thomas Anson

17 February, 1801.

. . . I have been obliged to give Lord Curzon an answer to his application in favour of Lieutenant Bromley which, without an explanation, may put him out of humour ; I therefore wish to convey through you, *in the strictest confidence*, that I will not be unmindful of his grandson, but the promotions have been so profuse, there are not less than fifty post-captains, and as many commanders of distinguished merit, without ships. I therefore must make a stand at setting out, which I am confirmed in by the entire approbation of Mr. Addington. . . .

— Pipon, Esq. (Chief Justice of Jersey)

19 February, 1801.

I shall seek merit and reward it, to the utmost of my power, in every branch of the navy, civil and military, but at present I am restrained from promoting by the very great number of meritorious officers on the list of post-captains and commanders now, and for a great length of time, unemployed ; and it is my fixed determination not to attend to any recommendation whatsoever, except on occasions of brilliant services against the enemy, until they are provided for.

¹ [Admiral Sir] Robert Howe Bromley [Bart.].

PROMOTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS 333

Lord Viscount Garlies¹

20 February, 1801.

As I am never unmindful of you, the first thought which occurred, after I came out of Buckingham House on the 14th, was your having suggested a wish to go into a ship of the line. . . .

Lord Keith

21 February, 1801.

Your friends will have told you how I came here. What sort of a figure I shall make, will be seen. I have known many a good Admiral make a wretched First Lord of the Admiralty. I will, however, support Commanders-in-Chief upon all occasions, and prohibit any intrigue against them in this office. Sorry I am to trespass upon their patronage, but having come to a resolution not to promote at home until all the meritorious post-captains and commanders are provided for—and God knows there is plenty of them—I must trouble you with the enclosed list. The young man (Brawn), in whose favour the King takes an interest, I hope you will soon have an opportunity to promote.

I had the pleasure to see your daughter a few days ago, and in her I saw a striking feminine resemblance of what I remember of you, with a fine understanding.

Health and success to you.

Commanders to be made Post.

Barrington Dacres.
Hon. G. H. L. Dundas.
George Long.

Lieutenants to be made Commanders.

Ernest Brawn, of Renown.
R. B. Campbell, First of Kent.
Hon. F. W. Aylmer.
Lewis Shephard, First of
Généreux.
Henry Richardson, of Caroline.

¹ Succeeded to the Peerage as 7th Earl of Galloway in 1806. His brother, Colonel William Stewart, was accompanying Nelson to Copenhagen.

Sir James Saumarez

25 February, 1801.

. . . I am surrounded with applications, independent of the commands of His Majesty's Ministers. . . .

The Duke of Grafton

26 February, 1801.

I will give Lord Augustus Fitzroy a larger and sounder frigate than L'Oiseau as soon as I can, and I propose to send the Lieutenant to Lord Hugh Seymour for that promotion which I cannot give at home.

General Souter Johnston

26 February, 1801.

. . . I am sure you will agree with me that the first-fruits should go to sons of officers of the Corps. I will thank you, however, to put me in possession of the birth, parentage, and education of Mr. [John] Hull, that I may when opportunity presents show the respect due to an officer of long service and merit.¹

John Mitford [Treasury]

27 February, 1801.

. . . I have suitors innumerable and very small means, but I will not forget that Captain Mitford is a near relation of yours, and I have greatly to lament that I cannot get at him as soon as I wish.

¹ Cf. *Naval Chronicle*, iv. 443: 'The L.C.A. have been pleased to appoint the sons of Captains Miller, Patten and Wymes, Lieutenants of the Marine Forces; in which corps their respective fathers have served many years, with honour to themselves and service to their country.'

Sir James Saumarez

28 February, 1801.

. . . I appointed seven commanders who were first lieutenants at the Battles of the Nile and St. Vincent to sloops four days ago. There are, of this description, thirty more at least, some of them having been upon the *pavé* since the memorable First of June—all of whom must be placed before I can attend to your friend. In the meanwhile I have the concurrence of the Board to clap a stopper upon all promotion.

Admiral William Dickson

1 March, 1801.

Many thanks, my dear Admiral, for your obliging letter upon my elevation to this office, the duties of which I will perform with the utmost degree of impartiality, for I bring no prejudices into office, and as few partialities as any man who ever filled the post. I find almost all the first lieutenants who were made commanders on the Battle of the Nile, several of those of St. Vincent, of Camperdown, of Lord Bridport's action before L'Orient, upon half-pay, and I feel myself bound, by every principle of justice, to bring them forward in the first instance: seven of them have been appointed to sloops since I came here, and I have resolved, with the concurrence of the Board, not to promote till this list of meritorious officers upon half-pay is thinned. This measure, which I think the whole service will approve, puts it out of my power to bring your nephew¹ forward so soon as I wish, but I will not be unmindful of him.

¹ [Admiral Sir] Archibald Collingwood Dickson [Bart.].

Lady Dalzell

7 March, 1801.

The moment I received Your Ladyship's letter . . . I made enquiry into the measures which had been taken upon the different applications, for the remission of the sentence of the court martial; among others I found a very strong one from Mr. Dundas, and the result is, that the late Board was convinced of Mr. Dalzell having been afflicted with insanity some years ago, but no instance of insanity appeared at the time he was tried, nor was he supposed to be in a state of insanity when he committed the offence for which he was brought to trial, and upon these grounds the Board did not think proper to do more than remit the two years' confinement in the Marshalsea. Whether anything farther can be done in the alleviation of Your Ladyship's distressed feelings, is a matter requiring much and deep consideration, but I beg leave to assure you, that a virtuous widow, struggling with the difficulties of providing for a numerous family, has always attracted my admiration; and I have greatly to lament that the deplorable state of the discipline of the navy, should be such a bar to the laudable pursuit Your Ladyship is engaged in.

Admiral Sir Thomas Pasley, Bart. 10 March, 1801.

When Admiral Rainier appointed your nephew to the command of the *Vulcan*, he must have been aware that the Admiralty could not confirm the commission, the vessel not being at that time, nor likely to be, registered on the list of the Navy. . . . Having said thus much, on the nature of the vacancy, I should feel myself wanting in attention to you, recollecting our long

acquaintance, were I not fairly to state to you that on seriously considering the unfortunate circumstances, which had attached on Lieut.¹ Heywood, I feel considerable scruples in bringing that officer forward, while the impression of his former misconduct is so fresh in the recollection of everyone, unless he should have the good fortune to render such services to his country as would, in my mind, outweigh the strong objections which, at present, operate with me against him. I do not mean, however, to be understood that if he should be put into a fair and regular vacancy, I would not confirm it; but the propriety of so doing and that of promoting from hence, stands on a different footing, and however desirous I may be of attending to your wishes, I cannot, with what I conceive to be my public duty, give promotion to Lieutenant Heywood in the way you have desired.

H.R.H. the Duke of Kent

11 March, 1801.

I am sure Your Royal Highness will do me the justice to believe that I am always ready to attend to your wishes, and to those of every branch of the Royal Family. At present there is an entire stop put to promotion, on account of the great number of meritorious post-captains and commanders upon half-pay.

Duchess of Gordon

20 March, 1801.

. . . Greenwich Hospital has always been considered as an asylum for wounded officers in

¹ Sir Thos. Pasley married Mary, daughter of Thomas Heywood, Esq., Chief Justice of the Isle of Man. Peter Heywood had been condemned to death, but reprieved, for his part in the mutiny of the Bounty. He died a post-captain.

preference to all others, and in the second place for those worn out by age and infirmities proceeding from long and arduous service. These considerations alone will govern my conduct in the administration of this patronage, uninfluenced by any protection whatever. . . .

Sir Charles Davers, Bart.

23 March, 1801.

A number of the crew of the *Active* are implicated in a misprision of mutiny which will probably end fatally to some of them, and the rest must be distributed into other ships: my disposition, therefore, to send Captain Davers to a more favourable climate is for the present suspended, but the moment that ship is in a state for service, I will take measures either to employ her in escorting a convoy to a certain latitude, or to send her into the Mediterranean, for we have delegated to the Commander-in-Chief, in those seas, the authority of fixing all the stations from Cape Finisterre to Constantinople.

Sir Charles Grey

28 March, 1801.

Lieutenant King¹ has been playing a game to get to Ireland, which has lowered him very much in my opinion. He is brave and enterprising, but, like the rest of the Aristocracy, thinks he has from that circumstance a right to promotion in prejudice to men of better services and superior merit, which I never will submit to. Having refused the Prince of Wales, Duke of Clarence,

¹ [Captain] Edward King, R.N., third son of the Earl of Kingston and brother of General Lord Erris, who served with St. Vincent and Grey in their West India operations.

Duke of Kent, and Duke of Cumberland, you will not be surprized that I repeat the impossibility of departing from any principle which would let in such inundation upon me as would tend to complete the ruin of the Navy. We propose to give Mr. King the command of one of the gun brigs to be employed in the Baltic: he will not obtain rank by it, but the daring service he will be employed upon may lead to it.

Rear-Admiral Duckworth

29 March, 1801.

. . . Allow me as an old friend to caution you against giving an order to act in a vacancy, to any person who has not duly served his time and regularly passed the examination for a lieutenant, in all forms. The Board has come to a strong resolution on this subject, and such a proceeding will be a bar to promotion afterwards. The inroads and abuses which have crept into every department of the Navy, require a strong hand to crush: regardless, as I am, of the unpopularity which attaches upon all attempts to correct abuses, I am determined to support the Board, *coûte que coûte*, in every strong measure which it is judged fit to take, whenever these evils present (which God knows happen frequently), and by that means lay a foundation for my successor to restore the Navy to its pristine vigour.

Lord Viscount Garlies

30 March, 1801.

Captain Brown, not Captain Murray, succeeds you in the command of the Hussar. I rejoice most exceedingly that Lord Gardner is reconciled

to his command. No man is more interested in his happiness than I am. I cannot give a better proof of it than having appointed his son to the command of the *Lion*, a very short time after I took my seat at this Board, and everything shall be done for the accommodation of Lady Gardner in the *Dryad*. I can have no objection to Lord Gardner availing himself of any pretext to send the Hussar to Spithead, but after having refused this accommodation to Admirals, I never can appear in it to Captains—the Service has been most shamefully and scandalously prostituted in this way, and I am moving heaven and earth to stop the torrent.

Mrs. Montagu

6 April, 1801.

From the incredible number of meritorious post-captains and commanders I have found without employment, I have been under the painful necessity of putting a total stop to promotion, to either of those ranks, and I see no prospect of my being able to relax an iota upon this subject. The officers of the *Ville de Paris* remain as they did when I left her, and my own nephew,¹ who is reputed an officer of uncommon merit and acquirements, stands as he did before I came into office : and I have refused to promote, at the request of four Princes of the Blood. Having said this much I am sure you will not charge me with neglecting you, Madam, for whom I entertain the highest respect and shall be proud of any occasion to prove with how much regard I am, etc., etc.

¹ [Admiral of the Fleet Sir] William Parker [Bart.].

Commissioner Fanshawe

9 March [? April], 1801.

I am happy to have anticipated your wishes in favour of your son, by holding out every degree of sanction and encouragement to Admiral Duckworth to connive at officers quitting their ships and returning to England, which they will be the more prone to do, because of the unprofitableness of the station and the little prospect any of them have of adding to their fame or fortune. . . .

Lord Keith

18 April, 1801.

Sir Thomas Pasley has requested I will remind you of his nephew,¹ who I believe to be very deserving the rank of post-captain, and everything is due to the uncle.

John Robinson, Esq.

20 April, 1801.

Upon a minute investigation here, I can find no instance of a captain, having declined the command of a ship after being appointed to one, on account of infirmities, being promoted to the flag, and there is a very remarkable precedent in point, that of Captain Harrison, who was Sir George Pocock's captain in the East Indies, and at the Havannah, and in other respects an officer of the highest reputation, who when it came to his turn was placed on the superannuated list, he having been afflicted with the same calamitous disorder Captain Boston labours under. Thus circumstanced, I have greatly to lament having, in my correspondence with you, given any, the

¹ [Admiral Sir] Thomas Briggs, in command of the *Salamine*.

slightest encouragement to his hopes, the more so because I really feel a very great interest about him, considerably increased by yours.

Earl Spencer

23 April, 1801.

I have lately had several conversations with Mr. Addington, on the subject of a Memorial which has been presented by Captain Richard Graves, who was passed over on the late promotion, praying to be placed on the list of flag officers, and from everything I have been able to collect, of his opinions on the subject, I can perceive a very strong disposition to gratify him.

On a fair consideration of the case, I confess, supposing that the objection to his promotion to have been grounded solely on his not having served during the present war, that I have considerable doubts of the propriety of setting him aside, as I find upon enquiry that since the commencement of it, he has exerted every possible endeavour, publicly and privately, to obtain employment, and therefore no blame can fairly be attributed to him for his not having been called into service.

I have not the honour of any personal knowledge of Captain Graves, nor of his services, so that I cannot have a private inclination to gratify, one way or the other, nor have I any information of the nature of those services, excepting from the statement made in his Memorial and the documents found in this office, which, as far as they go, place his professional character in a fair point of view: I wish, however, before I speak to Mr. Addington again, to learn from Your Lordship whether the

objection to Captain Graves's being included in the late promotion rested solely on the ground he has stated, or whether any other circumstances had reached you respecting the character of this officer, that appeared to render it improper to include him in it, and shall feel greatly obliged to Your Lordship for a few lines on the subject, when you can make it convenient to favour me with them.

If Captain Graves should be restored to his rank, I am not able to discover a shade of difference between his case and that of Captain Hotchkys, who, it appears, had frequently applied for employment without success.¹

Lord Elcho

21 May, 1801.

I hope it is needless to repeat to Your Lordship that I should have very great pleasure in complying with your wishes respecting Serjeant Trotter, if it was a proper thing for me to do. The late Board of Admiralty having made the distinctions with a considerable degree of attention, I cannot without exposing myself to numerous claims, in favour of persons whose manners and habits render them unfit to hold commissions, promote from the Halbard to a rank which immediately ushers them into the society of men of birth and character, without the strongest pretensions.

¹ Marginal note by E. P. B., 28th March 1822: 'This letter is of the utmost importance to shew the fair and impartial dealing of His Lordship's character in office.' Brenton had been given permission by St. Vincent to make extracts from certain of his letter books, in 1817, and he has marked in pencil those he wished to copy. In some cases, permission is withheld. Lord St. Vincent died in 1823.

Rt. Hon. Lord John Townshend

13 May, 1801.

No apology was necessary for the application you have made in favour of Lieutenant Lamborn, who I know to be a meritorious officer. He cannot be in a better line for promotion than first lieutenant with Sir James Saumarez, who if the enemy gives him an opportunity will place the *Cæsar* in the front of the battle—the only chance any officer has of preferment, while I continue at this Board, there being such an incredible number of meritorious captains unemployed, that I cannot, in justice to them, promote others until they are taken care of, unless for brilliant services in arms.

Duckworth

15 May, 1801.

. . . We have given Mr. Gregory the rank of Commander, and I should be very glad to employ him, but that is impossible, until more than one hundred meritorious officers of the same rank, who have been long on half-pay and completely neglected, are provided for. The same cause operates against the first lieutenant of the *Leviathan*, for the Board has come to a resolution not to make any promotion here; consequently every vacancy that does not arise from death, or sentence of Court Martial, will be filled from hence. . . . Pray explain to your lieutenants that they cannot be promoted in any other way than I have before mentioned, which will show them that there is no want of zeal on your part to serve them, and that it originates from hence. . . .

A. Macdonell, Esq.

16 May, 1801.

I am confident that in replying to the Chief of an illustrious Race, for which I have long enter-

tained the highest value and respect, I shall have credit for the justness of the principles on which I act. Had you been witness to the lamentable state of the discipline of the Channel Fleet when I took the command of it, which originated entirely from the licentiousness of the officers, you would not have thought, even in the case of a beloved brother, that the measures which have been taken to restore it have been in any instance harsh, or even more than was absolutely necessary to preserve the fleet.

No man can be more sensible of the merit and eminent services of the Macdonells from the year 1758 to this hour, and the moment I can, with any degree of propriety, call upon your brother, I will.

Lord Keith

17 May, 1801.

I have only [to] describe my young friend who will have the honour to present you with this as the son of Vice-Admiral Christopher Parker, and the grandson and namesake of Sir Peter, to insure him protection and promotion when you shall judge him fit for it. . . . [P.S.] Your Lordship had best continue Mr. Parker with Hope for a year or two.

Lady Bromley

25 May, 1801.

I felt happy in preventing a Court Martial to inquire into the accident which happened to the Inspector, because an officer always suffers in the eye of the public by such a trial.

Lord Gardner

26 May, 1801.

I am extremely concerned that Your Lordship's wishes in favour of Mr. Grant militate

against a principle I have been endeavouring to establish for many years past, viz., that no man whatsoever should be permitted to hold a Purser's warrant, who did not actually perform in person the duties of that employment, and there are some strong representations from me, on this head, in the Office; and I believe several Pursers who held public employment were superseded in consequence of these representations, and I removed a Private Secretary of Mr. Nepean's from the Minotaur, because he did not make his appearance within a limited time. Thus circumstanced, I cannot comply with the proposition made by Mr. Grant; but I shall have great pleasure in recommending your nephew, Mr. Barrie, to fill an Admiralty vacancy of commander.

Sir Wm. Pulteney

9 June, 1801.

I beg leave to repeat to you that nothing will give me more pleasure than to meet all your wishes. The certificate of Captain (now Admiral) Swiney is satisfactory, as to the integrity and capacity of Lieutenant Arnold. I am endeavouring to ascertain the truth of the objection, which I had the honour to state to you in conversation. All I have yet learnt is, that the aspersion was made a matter of much publicity at the time and a strong impression taken against Mr. Arnold, and the failure (which, in the judgment of some few eminent men, who served in that little squadron, was considered as a national disgrace) imputed to him.

Lord Kensington

13 June, 1801.

My respect for Your Lordship's character and very long services in the House of Commons,

where I had the honour to sit with you, would prompt me to an instant compliance with your wishes, was it in my power. I have so many engagements for commissions in the Marines, that I can only place your friend Mr. John James at the end of a long list, on which he will be fairly dealt with, if he is the son of a gentleman, of good morals, proper age, and stature.

Lord Rolle

17 June, 1801.

I am very thankful for your information on the subject of the Marine half-pay list, which is most shamefully loaded. One captain has recently been struck off it, by the King's command, for declining to serve, and I will do my endeavour to compel all who are capable of service and fit to hold commissions, which I am sorry to say very many of those on half-pay are not, and who have been placed on that list by compromise, to serve.

George Rose, Esq.

17 June, 1801.

I am infinitely obliged to you for reminding me of your kind intention, which had slipp'd my memory. Lieutenant J. Milligen Seppings,¹ now serving in the *Ville de Paris*, would fill the employment in question better than any man I know.

Sir A. S. Hamond

30 July, 1801.

I have a letter from Sir R. Curtis of the same tenor and date with the enclosed. I have not

¹ Son of [Sir] Robert Seppings, of Devonport Dockyard; he became Inspector of Shipping under the Honourable East India Company, at Calcutta.

embarrassed him with one recommendation for the rank he is naturally anxious to obtain for his son, and will with great pleasure support any appointment he may give him on a vacancy, but cannot depart from the principle I have laid down.

John Cleveland, Esq.

7 August, 1801.

The Board consider the claims set up by officers as highly presumptuous, to which I most heartily subscribe, and will never endure to be told to whom promotion is due, for services performed, excepting in the only way it can with propriety be represented.

The Hon. Capt. Cochrane

8 August, 1801.

I return you many thanks for your obliging letter of the 9th April, and have the pleasure to acquaint you that a commission has been signed this day appointing Lord Cochrane a post-captain, which would have been done sooner, had we received the account of his gallant action, before that of his capture.

Commissioner Duncan

11 August, 1801.

No one can with justice accuse me of neglecting the children of the service. Your son was in the command of a sloop of war when I came to this Board, at which period I found more than one hundred commanders of merit upon half-pay, some few of whom I have found means to give employment to. In justice to the rest, I cannot make an engagement to place Captain Duncan in a specific sloop. . . .

Countess Malmesbury

20 August, 1801.

All the officers attached to Lord Nelson, with the exception of Captain Hardy, were continued in the *St. George*, to be in the way of His Lordship on a future occasion, which I am not at liberty to communicate, and Vice-Admiral Pole in that ship, with several others, sailed yesterday from Spithead, so that I have not in my power to obey Your Ladyship's commands on the subject of Mr. Elliot.¹ When Lord Minto arrives I shall have an opportunity to explain this matter to him, and can at any time bring his son to England, should His Lordship think it advisable.

Marquis Townshend

22 August, 1801.

The gun boat at Blakeney had not escaped us; repeated orders have been sent to Lieutenant Suckling² to proceed to the Nore, in order to her being put to rights, and had he not been nearly allied to Lord Nelson, stronger measures would have been taken. I have every reason to believe the report of Your Lordship's tenant is correct, but I fear these malpractices are not confined to Mr. Suckling.

Captain Molloy

26 August, 1801.

I delayed answering your letters of the 6th March and 13th of May until I had fully examined

¹ Lieutenant [Admiral Sir] George Elliot, second son of the Earl of Minto.

² Maurice William Suckling (Lieutenant 8th March 1794). Court-martialled 12th September, at Sheerness, for neglect of duty and absenting himself without leave. Suckling had been Lieutenant of the *Agamemnon* under Nelson in 1795. He died in 1820, still a Lieutenant.

into all the merits stated in your case, and compared the different bearings of the evidence given at the Court Martial, with the sentence of the Court, which I have at length been able to accomplish; and having given the subject the most deliberate consideration, it appears to me, that from the testimony given by officers of rank and consideration, who were brought forward upon the trial and who, from the relative position of the ships in which they served, were best able to judge of the conduct of the *Cæsar* on the 29th May and 1st of June, the sentence on you was completely justifiable. And possessing this opinion, I am under the painful necessity of informing you that it is impossible for me, consistently with my public duty, to advise His Majesty to place your name on the list of flag officers. I return herewith your Memorial and the several papers which were transmitted to me.

Viscount Garlies

31 August, 1801.

Are you quite sure Captain Codrington wishes to be employed? If he does, I shall be very glad to place him according to your wishes, when any arrangement about Your Lordship gives an opening.

Lord Keith

4 September, 1801.

. . . The list of Post-Captains and Commanders so far exceeds that of ships and sloops, I cannot consistently, with what is due to the public and to the incredible number of meritorious persons of those classes upon half-pay, promote except upon very extraordinary occasions, such as that of Lord Cochrane and Captain Dundas, who have

the rank of Post-Captain; nor can I confirm any of the appointments made by Commanders-in-Chief upon foreign stations, except the vacancies are occasioned by death or the sentences of Courts Martial; and as your Squadron must be considerably reduced in strength of men by the very hard services in Egypt, it will be advisable not to commission any captured ship or vessel that is not very eligible. . . .

Viscount Nelson

7 September, 1801.

No man has a better right than Your Lordship to recommend officers for employment, at sea or ashore. You must be aware that, in the course of very long service, I cannot be without attachments to Marine officers, who have been my shipmates and deserved well, and I have never been able to obtain a benefit to any of them, excepting Adjutant Varlo. I will nevertheless hold Captain Foley in remembrance, although I cannot promise him the succession to the Paymastership at Plymouth in case of a vacancy.

Sir Richard J. Strachan, Bart. 7 September, 1801.

Can you, on a retrospect of my conduct towards you, from your early youth to this hour, reconcile to yourself the having reproached me with degrading you? The Donegal was intended for your accommodation and the gratification of your wishes to be on shore, and an acting captain appointed for that purpose. I return your hasty letter, not wishing to keep possession of a document so inconsistent with what is due from you to [me].

Nelson

Fulham, 9 September, 1801.

. . . I am, as you know, well disposed towards Captain Conn, but if Your Lordship knew the incredible number of Commanders senior to him on the list, who importune me daily for employments, the removing him into an active sloop would not appear so easy a matter. I do assure you a just disposition of the Patronage is the most difficult thing I have to perform; and it is no less my duty than inclination to discharge it conscientiously.

Colonel Smith

14 September, 1801.

Lord St. Vincent had no other view in explaining to Colonel Smith that Sir Richard Bickerton had applied for Captain Fowke to be his captain, than to show that such an event had taken place: and he cannot avoid expressing some surprise that after what passed between the Colonel and him, any expectation of active employment for Captain Smith, in the first instance, should have been formed.

Lord De Dunstanville

14 September, 1801.

Lord Spencer's friends, candidates to the Academy, are for the most part admitted, and there appear only two names before that of Your Lordship's young kinsman. I am not over partial to that seminary, although I think it absolutely necessary that all young men intended for the Navy should be grounded in the rudiments of navigation before they embark.

Sir Richard Strachan

16 September, 1801.

Your commission for the *Donegal* will be sent by this post and you will take the command of her whenever it suits your health and convenience, but for God's sake dismiss the suspicions which haunt your mind, and do not give credit to the false reports which are continually in circulation at the sea-ports.

Earl Dundonald

24 September, 1801.

I can have no difficulty in acknowledging that the capture of the *Gamo* reflects the highest degree of credit on Lord Cochrane and the officers and crew of the *Speedy*.

The first account of that brilliant action reached the Admiralty very early in the month of August, previously to which intelligence had been received of the capture of the *Speedy*, by which Lord Cochrane was made prisoner; and until his exchange could be effected and the necessary inquiry into the cause and circumstances of the loss of that sloop had taken place, it was impossible for the Board, consistently with its usual forms, to mark its approbation of His Lordship's conduct. Lord Cochrane was promoted to the rank of post-captain on the 8th August, the day on which his sentence of acquittal for the loss of the *Speedy* was received, which was all that could under the existing circumstances be done.

Having entered into this explanation with Your Lordship, it remains for me only to add that, however disposed the Board might be to pay attention to the merits of His Lordship, it could not consistently with its public duty give him

rank from the time of the capture of the *Gamo*, a measure quite unprecedented, without doing an act of injustice to other deserving officers.

Sir Philip Stephens, Bart.

5 October, 1801.

Many thanks for your obliging letter upon the signature of the Preliminaries, which I am proud of being an humble instrument to the attainment of. I am beset, as you may imagine, with numberless applications upon the subject of promotions, which I have hitherto withstood, but I agree with you that the Board should be governed by former practice at the close of such a successful naval war as we have witnessed. . . .

Captain Brabazon

13 October, 1801.

If an officer employed on the Impress Service in this county had brought forward any claim for the payment of bounty to new raised men, or for hiring vessels for H.M. Service, in the District wherein he had been employed, such claim would not have been admitted, any more than a claim for the trouble of paying his contingent disbursements, or the payment of his Gangs ; and I must confess that I agree in the principle that if an officer is employed by the Public, whether on the regulating the Impress Service, or in any other way, he is not to limit exactly the extent of the services to be required from him. . . .

Nelson

15 October, 1801.

. . . Encompassed as I am by applications and presumptuous claims, I have nothing for it

but to act upon the defensive, as Your Lordship will be compelled to do, whenever you are placed in the situation I at present fill.

H.R.H. The Duke of Kent

16 October, 1801.

. . . If, as probably may be the case, it should be judged necessary to promote a certain number of officers, previous to the arrangement of the Peace Establishment, I shall feel it a matter of public duty, while I leave no distinguished merit unrewarded, to confine that promotion within the narrowest limits ; and as there is a considerable number of flag officers now serving, whose recommendations must and ought, in preference, to be attended to, and others who have served under my own flag in the Mediterranean and Channel Fleets, I fear that it will not be in my power to bring forward the officers Your Royal Highness has been pleased to mention, whose claims individually, though their characters stand fair, do not place them on a better footing than one-half of the officers of the same rank in His Majesty's Service.

Earl of Portsmouth

28 October, 1801.

It is impossible for me to enter into any engagement on the subject of promotion before all the claims of the numberless candidates are brought before me ; and notwithstanding the desire I feel to accomplish Your Lordship's wishes in favour of Captain Festing, you must be aware that the services of the officers who have been actively employed will call for attention in preference to those who served in the Sea Fencibles.

John Wilmot, Esq.

14 November, 1801.

. . . I am so very much embarrassed with the numerous claims for promotion, that I have not yet made my mind up to any, the list of officers so far exceeding that of ships, one-third of the captains and commanders must have been without employment had the war continued.

Earl of Sandwich

23 November, 1801.

I very much lament that the very numerous lists of officers of every description do not admit of my entertaining a thought of my recommending the extensive promotion which (by the incessant applications I receive) seems to be a prevailing public opinion, very difficult to be removed from the minds of the candidates, who naturally seize every occasion to solicit the protection of their friends.

Duchess of Gordon

Langdons, 29 November, 1801.

I am honoured with Your Grace's letter of the 20th, enclosing one the Duke of Gordon had received from Captain Tidy. The late Board of Admiralty could only have been governed by the statement made by Rear-Admiral Sir J. Warren of the affair at Vigo, and it is not to be presumed that the Rear-Admiral made an incorrect one. . . .

Marquis of Abercorn

1 December, 1801.

. . . We have indeed reason to be proud of Sir Edward Hamilton, whose valour stands almost unrivalled in these days of noble achievements. . . .

Earl of Northampton

1 December, 1801.

. . . Lieutenant Shirley of the Dolphin Cutter ; the line of service he has preferred is not that from whence promotion should in my judgment be given, unless some brilliant and successful action with the enemy has grown out of it, for I have through life discouraged every friend of mine from serving in a cutter, or hired armed vessel. . . .

Admiral Roddam

22 December, 1801.

The newspapers are, I believe, the only authority of a great promotion, although I daily receive the most powerful recommendations. Should such an event take place, I very much doubt whether I shall be able to accomplish your wishes in favour of Lieutenant William Landless for this plain reason : that an officer serving on board a guardship in the Downs has not the same pretensions with those who have exposed their persons and hazarded their constitutions during this long and eventful war. . . .

Earl of Hardwicke

2 December, 1801.

The numerous high pretensions powerfully backed which present daily for promotion, added to the great excess of the navy list, will I fear prevent any taking place. . . .

Duchess of Devonshire

22 December, 1801

I am, as Your Grace imagines, so beset and perplexed with the applications for promotion, that on consideration of the enormous size of the list

of sea officers, not more than one-third of whom could be employed in case of another war, I very much doubt whether any addition can be made with propriety. . . .

Mrs. Mansfield

27 December, 1801.

. . . No opportunity has offered to place Mr. Foster in a larger ship than the *Powerful*, and it is doubtful whether any ship of the line will be employed during the peace. . . .

Marquis Townshend

31 December, 1801.

I have the honour to acknowledge Your Lordship's letter of the 29th, enclosing an application from several respectable gentlemen of Yarmouth in favour of Lieutenant William Fisher.¹ In justice to myself, without meaning to assume an extraordinary degree of merit for his promotion to the rank of lieutenant a short time since, it is fit Your Lordship should be acquainted that having been apprised by a gentleman at Yarmouth that Mr. John Fisher had a son on board the *Dragon* in the Mediterranean, I wrote immediately to Captain Campbell and requested he would cause Mr. William Fisher to be examined for a lieutenant the moment his time was completed, and I also took measures to have him appointed to a vacancy. Before either of these events could take place, Captain Campbell was made an admiral and, being suspended in the command of the *Dragon*, came to England and brought

¹ See notice of Captain William Fisher in O'Byrne's *Naval Biographical Dictionary* (1849).

Mr. William Fisher with him, and the instant he had passed his examination for a lieutenant, I directed a commission to be made out for him. The whole merit of which, if there was any, rests with me, not with Admiral Campbell, and the fact is simply this: I felt a pride in serving a member of a worthy family whose borough politics had been adverse to me, and when I recommended him to Admiral Campbell, I was ignorant that he had the smallest degree of interest about him. It is evident the Fisher family did not give me credit for so much liberality, by ascribing to Admiral Campbell that which I know he disclaims. This misrepresentation never can operate against the young man in question; and although I cannot upon any principle of rectitude comply with the application on account of the short service and standing of Mr. W. Fisher on the list of lieutenants, I will not be unmindful of him. . . .

Earl of Portsmouth

4 January, 1802.

I cannot possibly agree in opinion with Your Lordship that a person sitting quietly by his fireside and enjoying very near a sinecure, during such a war as we have been engaged in, has the same pretensions to promotion with the man who has exposed his person and hazarded his constitution in every clime. At the same time I admit that a command of the Sea Fencibles has not been considered an impediment to promotion, and it will afford me great pleasure if I can at any time, consistently with what is due to officers who have highly distinguished themselves, meet your wishes in favour of Captain Festing.

Lady J. W. Jervis

Rochetts, 28 January, 1802.

I am so circumstanced as not to be able to give Your Ladyship any encouragement to expect the promotion of Lieutenant Shulldham, who is both a young man and a young officer. . . .

Sir A. Schomberg

Rochetts, 31 January, 1802.

The moment I learnt that Lord Keith had fulfilled my wishes in giving your son an order to act in an Admiralty vacancy, I sent directions for a commission to be made out for him, which I have reason to believe was complied with immediately. It is very natural at his age to look forward to another step, even before he is secure of that to which he so lately aspired, and I do assure you I shall feel very much disposed to advance him to it at a proper time. . . .

John Beddingfield, Esq.

31 January, 1802.

No one can be more hurt at the event of Sir Edward Hamilton's trial than I am, for nothing can injure him so much as the publication you mention to be in his contemplation : in short, the less he says and does the better. I am sensible, however, of the difficulty of conveying advice to a person of high feelings and great military reputation. At the same time, it will be an act of very great kindness to soothe his mind, and prevent, if possible, any appeal to the public.

I have not read Mr. Pelletier's ¹ Journal : by your account he has made himself liable to a prosecution in the Court of King's Bench.

¹ The prosecution of Peltier, a French emigrant, for libel against Napoleon, was undertaken by the Attorney-General, Mr. Spencer Perceval.

The Hon. Charles Herbert

8 February, 1802.

I was in hopes that recent events would have convinced you and every other officer in the navy that the disinclination I showed to permit officers to retire from their ships before the signature of the Definitive Treaty proceeded from a sense of public duty, which I never will swerve from. Should your health disable you from continuing in the command of the *Amelia*, the Board will take proper steps upon a representation being publicly made to the Secretary, for I cannot individually lend myself to a measure repugnant to my feelings as an officer.

Admiral Sir Thomas Pasley

8 February, 1802.

Many improper persons, such as Writers, Under Clerks and Secretaries, nay even menial servants who had obtained two years rate of midshipman, having during the late war been placed on the list of lieutenants, to the great injury and disgrace of His Majesty's Service, this Board came to a resolution some time ago to scrutinize the Passing Certificate before a commission was granted upon any application; and it appearing that five years of the servitude expressed on the Passing Certificate of Mr. Luckcraft . . . are irregular and ought not to have been admitted, I cannot consistently with the principle laid down comply with your request in his favour¹ . . . but if you will recommend any other person not liable to the before-mentioned objections, I will endeavour to obtain a commission for him.

¹ Upon further information the decision was reconsidered.

Colonel J. Leveson-Gower

12 February, 1802.

I should have apprised you of the promotion of your brother, but that I did not wish to affix a merit to an act of friendship in favour of a family I have long held in the highest respect and esteem, therefore strove to avert receiving the acknowledgment conveyed in your obliging letter of the 10th. I beg leave to assure you that I shall be happy on all occasions to give a proof of the esteem and regard with which I have the honour to be, etc., etc.

Dowager-Countess of Portsmouth

1 April, 1802.

. . . With all the respect and deference due from me to Your Ladyship, the justice I owe to the naval service requires that I should make a distinction between officers who have hazarded themselves in all climates during the late war and those who have enjoyed lucrative employments near their own doors, without being exposed to the arduous and eventful services the first mentioned have undergone.

Vice-Admiral Pringle

27 April, 1802.

. . . I hope very soon to extend the retired list [of the Corps of Marines] and in that event shall be very glad to find that the claims of Captain Roe entitle him to be placed thereon. The candidates are numerous : those who have been wounded in defence of their country have the first claim : in this opinion I am sure you will agree ; and where the decline of health is in equal degree, seniority will of course have the turn of the scale.

Colonel Thomas Graham

29 April, 1802.

Secret and Confidential.

His Majesty being in possession of the lists of promotion, I have no means of serving your friend, Lieutenant Stewart, but by contriving a vacancy in the Mediterranean, which Captain Markham is hard at work upon, and I have every reason to believe it will succeed.

Rt. Hon. Henry Dundas

2 May, 1802.

Mr. Nepean has put into my hands your letters to him of the 21st and 28th of April and that of yesterday, and I am extremely concerned to find that the names of three persons recommended to you by the City of Edinburgh have never before been mentioned to me. All those who stood upon my list, viz., Messrs. Wm. Young, Charles Inglis and Saml. Pym, are promoted from the rank of commander to that of post-captain; Lieutenants Wm. Richan and D. H. Mackay to the rank of commander; Mr. Wm. Craig, a midshipman, having unfortunately made his appearance before the Board, was objected to in such a manner that I could not justify giving him a commission. Mr. Wilkie could not be promoted for the reason assigned in my letter of the 16th June last. The names of Ramsay, Watson and Sharpe are new to me, and I have greatly to lament that I did not know the preference you give to Captain Watson in time, otherwise I would have contrived to squeeze him in, although I could not possibly have taken care of the other two.

THE ADMIRALTY

I. INTRODUCTION

THE Board of Admiralty, assembling under patent dated 19th February 1801, was as follows :

Admiral John Earl of St. Vincent, K.B.

Sir Philip Stephens, Bart.

Hon. William Eliot.

Captain Sir Thomas Troubridge, Bart., R.N.

James Adams, Esq.

Captain John Markham, R.N.

William Garthshore, Esq.

First Secretary, Evan Nepean, Esq.

Second Secretary, William Marsden, Esq.

Stephens had been a Lord Commissioner of the Admiralty since March 1795, when Lord Hood retired from the Board. Appointed Second Secretary of the Admiralty, 16th October 1759, in Anson's time, he entered the House of Commons, in 1759, as M.P. for Liskeard, co. Cornwall, and succeeded Cleveland as First Secretary, 18th June 1763. In 1801 he was sitting as M.P. for Sandwich, which he had represented since 1768.

Eliot joined Spencer's Board, 10th July 1800, having previously been Secretary to Legation, Berlin, in 1791; Secretary to Embassy, The Hague, in 1793; Envoy to Munich, in 1796; and Minister to the Palatine and Diet of Ratisbon, in 1796. He was Member for St. Germans, co.

Cornwall, and a younger son of the first Lord Eliot. An elder brother, who had died in 1797, married Pitt's sister. In 1804 his eldest surviving brother succeeded their father as second Lord Eliot, and was created first Earl of St. Germans in 1815. William Eliot succeeded as second Earl on his brother's death in 1823. From his relationship to the Pitts, Eliot was naturally in close touch with the retiring Prime Minister, and Rose notes in his Diary, 12th February 1801: 'Mr. William Eliot declared his intention to Mr. Pitt to resign the Admiralty.' Presumably he was one of those who acceded to Pitt's personal request to remain in office under his successor.

Adams, Member for Bramber, co. Sussex, since 1796, appears to have been a relation of Addington, who in 1781 had married one of the daughters of Leonard Hammond, of Cheam. In September 1796 James Adams married the other daughter.

Garthshore, Member for Weymouth and Melcombe Regis since 1796, was sometime private Secretary to Dundas, Secretary of State for War.

Nepean was for many years Secretary to Admiral Lord Shuldham. He had already served under St. Vincent, having been his Purser and Secretary in the *Foudroyant*, in the Channel Fleet, during the American War. During that period St. Vincent was in close and confidential communication with Lord Shelburne, at that time one of the leaders of the Opposition, and upon the change of Ministry, Nepean was appointed by Shelburne Under-Secretary of State (Home Office). Nepean had doubtless been employed by the Opposition in the preparation of the case against Sandwich; his services were certainly well rewarded. When giving evidence before the

Royal Commission on Fees, Gratuities, Perquisites, and Emoluments in the several Public Offices in 1784, Nepean stated that his income was over a thousand a year as an Under-Secretary; in addition, he held the office of Naval Officer of the Grenades, in the West Indies, at £450 a year, which he discharged by deputy; he was Joint Commissioner of the Privy Seal, and Agent to provide presents for the Indians in Canada. In June 1793, the Commissioners recommended the abolition of one of the Under-Secretaryships; Nepean succeeded Stephens as First Secretary of the Admiralty in March 1795, retaining the while his appointments of Naval Officer of St. Vincent and Dominica, and Clerk of the Courts, Jamaica, offices which he continued to execute by deputy, with remainder to his son. In addition, he obtained a dormant pension for his wife. He entered the House of Commons as Member for Queenborough in 1796, and was now canvassing the constituency of Bridport in anticipation of the coming General Election.

Marsden came to the Admiralty as Second Secretary in March 1795, at the same time as Nepean. In his autobiographical Memoir, he attributed his nomination entirely to Lord Spencer's interest in him, his works on the Far East having gained him a considerable reputation. Upon Spencer's resignation, Marsden says he considered the propriety of resigning also, but was advised by Spencer 'not to think of making the gratuitous sacrifice of a good appointment, in favour of persons with whom I was unacquainted, and who would give me no thanks for the vacancy.' Accordingly, 'I followed His Lordship's kind and prudential recommendation, and a few days after was introduced to his successor, the Earl of

St. Vincent, by whom I was graciously received,' and who, during the course of his administration, behaved to me with uniform attention and politeness.' The Marsdens were Irish; in October 1801 Alexander, a younger brother of William, was appointed Under-Secretary to the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant for Ireland.

Two other appointments, outside Board rank, may be noticed. Benjamin Tucker, St. Vincent's Secretary and Prize Agent in the Channel Fleet, accompanied his Chief to the Admiralty as Private Secretary to the First Lord. Tucker, like Nepean, had at one time been Secretary to Lord Shulldham. In July 1801 Tucker was appointed Clerk of the Cheque at Plymouth Dockyard, and in November he joined the Navy Board as a Commissioner, in the vacancy caused by the enforced retirement of George Rogers. The Private Secretaryship vacated by Tucker was given to George Parker, elder brother of [Admiral of the Fleet Sir] William Parker, who remained with St. Vincent, accompanying him as his Secretary when he went afloat in 1806.

The other appointment of some interest was the nomination of Thomas Jervis as Counsel to the Admiralty, in the vacancy caused by the appointment of Spencer Perceval as Solicitor-General. The First Lord's second-cousin came of a legal family, his father having been Chief Justice of Surat. In succeeding a future Prime Minister as Counsel to the Admiralty, he followed in the footsteps of St. Vincent's father, who had held the office more than fifty years before. Thomas Jervis, appointed K.C. in 1806, continued as Admiralty Counsel until 1824, when he was succeeded by Horace Twiss, Judge Advocate of the Fleet. His son, John, carried on the legal

traditions of the Jervis family, being knighted when Attorney-General in 1846, and becoming Lord Chief Justice in 1850.

Neither of the Junior Naval Lords was a member of the House of Commons, and steps were taken to bring them into Parliament at an early date. Upon news of the death of Lord Hugh Seymour, who had represented Portsmouth since 1796, Markham was nominated and duly elected. He sat for Portsmouth, with the exception of two years, until his resignation in 1826, just before his death. Troubridge, it would appear from St. Vincent's letter to Addington, was the ministerial nominee for Westminster, but was released by the Prime Minister to contest Great Yarmouth. St. Vincent had himself sat for Yarmouth from 1784 to 1790, when Lord Lansdowne brought him in for Chipping Wycombe with his son, the Earl of Wycombe (afterwards second Marquess of Lansdowne). Troubridge's colleague in the coming contest was Thomas Jervis, Counsel to the Admiralty. Both Troubridge and Jervis were elected for Yarmouth at the General Election in July 1802.

II. LETTERS

MARKHAM AND PORTSMOUTH

Sir John Carter¹

30 October, 1801.

I am this instant informed by telegraph that Lord H. Seymour is no more, which I do most

¹ Mayor of Portsmouth. Knighted 22nd June 1773. Portsmouth returned two Members, and in 1816 his son, John [Bonham-] Carter became Markham's colleague. Bonham-

severely lament. Without presuming to claim anything touching his successor in the representation of Portsmouth, should a sea officer be thought of, you will find in Captain Markham everything you or your colleagues can wish or desire.

Addington

2 November, 1801.

The enclosed from Sir J. Carter will shew that all is going right at Portsmouth, the only sore place is that the Members of the County have occasionally trespassed upon the Patronage of the Borough.

Sir John Carter

2 November, 1801.

A bad cold and sore throat have prevented my going out these two days, but I have conveyed to Mr. Addington your wishes about the Patronage of the Borough, and I have every reason to believe he will attend strictly to them.

Captain Markham will proceed to Portsmouth as soon as the Writ is moved for; and both he and myself are very sensible of your kind attention to him. I write to Mr. Godwin¹ by this Post, and shall be glad to receive your Instructions upon what is further proper to be done. . . .

J. Godwin, Esq.

2 November, 1801.

Without the most distant idea of availing myself of the official situation His Majesty has

Carter sat for Portsmouth till his death in 1838. Sir John was father-in-law of Admiral John Giffard, who was Governor of the Royal Naval College, Portsmouth, 1807-1819.

¹ John Godwin, chosen Mayor to succeed Sir John Carter, 22nd September 1801. At the same time Thomas Bonham and John Carter were chosen Aldermen.

been graciously pleased to advance me to, beyond what may be acceptable to you and the Body Corporate of Portsmouth, I beg leave to name Captain Markham to you as a person whose public and private character will, I am persuaded, merit your esteem and regard as a fit Candidate to represent you in Parliament, on the vacancy occasioned by the death of my much lamented friend Lord Hugh Seymour.

Lady Calder

2 November, 1801.

Surely, my dear Madam, you cannot be serious in what your Ladyship has written touching the views Sir Robert Calder has entertained, about the representation of Portsmouth in Parliament; if you are, it is the first knowledge I have ever had of such being his intention, and I certainly have had more or less conversation upon Portsmouth Politics with him and others who were supposed to know something about the matter. This being the case, I feel myself exonerated of having knowingly counteracted his designs by any public measure which it has been judged fit to adopt upon a late melancholy occasion.

Sir John Carter

3 November, 1801.

Captain Markham has this instant been with me to communicate the honor he has received from the Mayor, and will take an early opportunity to pay his respects in person. . . .

Captain Markham

10 November, 1801.

I rejoice that you go on so well at Portsmouth, and that the ceremony of landing the corpse of

Lord H. Seymour, which cannot be dispensed with, unless at the request of Lord Hertford, is not likely to delay your proceedings.

Troubridge is much agitated at the total dereliction of public business and duty in all the Ports, the number of useless supernumeraries on board the *Puissant* has added to it not a little, and he expects to hear of abuses to a much greater extent on your return to us, which I hope will happen in the course of the week.

TROUBRIDGE AND YARMOUTH

Marquis Townshend ¹

19 September, 1801.

Allow me to introduce my Relation, Mr. Thomas Jervis, to your acquaintance. He will have the honor to present Your Lordship with this at Yarmouth, and any attention you are disposed to shew him will oblige, etc.

Addington

15 October, 1801.

Private.—Since I had the pleasure of seeing you yesterday, I have been called upon by my friends at Yarmouth, to allow them to address themselves to Sir Thomas Troubridge, and the success of the battle I am pledged to fight in that Borough so much depends on his arm, that I hope you will give him up to me, especially as a Flag Officer appears better adapted to Westminster, and I think Mr. Hope² will be highly

¹ The House of Raynham was an important factor in the representation of Yarmouth.

² John Williams Hope, the banker, of Amsterdam. He and Sir Charles Morice Pole married daughters of John Goddard, of Rotterdam and Woodford Hall, Essex.

Gardner stood again for Westminster at the General Election of 1802. Pole came into Parliament for Newark-on-Trent.

flattered by Sir Charles Pole being put in nomination, in case Lord Gardner should decline, which I have every reason to believe he will.

Addington

22 October, 1801.

I troubled Mr. Vansittart with two letters . . . and I requested of him to state the predicament I was placed in at Yarmouth, for which place Sir T. Troubridge and Mr. Jervis are to set out on Saturday next.

Sir Thomas Gooch, Bart.¹

23 October, 1801.

As it is probable Sir T. Troubridge and my relation, Mr. Jervis, may pay their respects to you en route to, or from, Yarmouth, I apprise you of it from the respect and attention I really feel due to you, and not with the most distant view of soliciting your support of them in the event of a contest, which after the declaration you made to me last year would be extremely indelicate on my part.

James Mingay, Esq.

23 October, 1801.

I learn from my kinsman Jervis that you have views to represent Thetford,² and I desire you will let me know if in aught I can be useful to you, for politics will not operate in my mind

¹ Sir Thomas Gooch, of Benacre Hall, Suffolk. His son, [Sir] Thomas Sherlock Gooch, represented the County of Suffolk from 1806 to 1830.

² James Mingay, of Ashfield Lodge, Suffolk, was elected for Thetford, Norfolk, in 1806, but by Order of the House of Commons the return was amended and Thomas Creevey substituted.

to your prejudice, because I am sure they will never run away with you. At the same time I am not without hope that you will think the present Administration worthy of your support.

Sir Thomas Troubridge and Mr. Jervis leave Town to-morrow for Yarmouth, a measure of necessity produced by the management of Lord Bayning,¹ who contrived that no answer should be given to the proposition for a compromise, and now the *ultima ratio Regum* must decide.

Sir Robert Preston

31 October, 1801.

My Friends, Sir Thomas Troubridge and Mr. Jervis, are in for a contest at Yarmouth, and the sooner you signify your wishes in their favour to the Buoy Master and his Suite, the more effectually you will promote their Interests.

ADMIRALTY HOUSE

Mrs. Ricketts (his sister)

Mortimer Street, 16 February, 1801.

. . . I have every comfort and rooms sufficient for my purpose, insomuch I mean not to go into the Admiralty House until it has gone through a complete scouring and painting, very much wanted, for the servants of Lord and Lady Chatham were very sluttish, and Lady Spencer is ashamed to leave it in so dirty a state, although she has done everything in her power to make it otherwise. . . .

(*Add. MSS.* 29914, 344.)

¹ Charles Townshend, Baron Bayning of Foxley, M.P. for Great Yarmouth, 1761-1784. St. Vincent and Beaufoy took the seats held by Charles Townshend (Treasury of the Navy) and Richard Walpole in the General Election of 1784.

H.R.H. The Duke of Kent

16 October, 1801.

. . . If Your Royal Highness should at any time be pleased to honour me with your commands, you will find me at the Admiralty, having quitted my residence at Fulham¹ for the winter.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS OF CONGRATULATIONS

John Lloyd, Esq.

19 February, 1801.

I thank you a thousand times for the interest you take in a late event. The business of this Office is play to me, for I never will mix in Politics, farther than is necessary to acquit myself to the Persons I act with, who are much abler men than you are aware of.

Lord Keith

21 February, 1801.

Your friends will have told you how I came here. What sort of a figure I shall make will be seen. I have known many a good Admiral make a wretched First Lord of the Admiralty. I will, however, support Commanders-in-Chief upon all occasions, and prohibit any intrigue against them in this Office. . . .

Duke of Northumberland

25 February, 1801.

A thousand thanks to Your Grace for the interest you take in my appointment to this Board, where I hope to be of some use in stopping, if not radically reforming, the flagrant abuses which pervade the naval service, both civil and military.

¹ He took Sir A. Hamond's house at Fulham in March 1801.

Commissioner Fanshawe

25 February, 1801.

Many thanks for your well-judged letter. We are both actuated by the same principle and I flatter myself, if I have a reasonable tenure of my present situation, I shall be able to correct some of the gross abuses, which clog the wheels of the Service, and if permitted to go on much longer must swallow up all the means of the Country.

Duke of Grafton

26 February, 1801.

. . . The confidence which Your Grace reposes in my zeal and assiduity is well founded, but I have seen so many good and gallant Admirals make a very contemptible figure at this Board, that I do not feel so bold on the score of abilities as my friends are disposed to be. The Board is well composed, and there is a very able man at the head of the Navy Office. In the choice of Admiral Cornwallis to command the Channel Fleet I am countenanced by the universal opinion of the Profession, so that I set out well, and shall be happy at all times to receive your commands.

Filmer Honeywood, Esq.

26 February, 1801.

. . . I will endeavour by the exertion of all my faculties to eradicate the numberless abuses which have crept into every department of the Navy, civil and military, and to prove myself a faithful servant to the Public. . . .

Lord Duncan

28 February, 1801.

I feel very sensibly the obliging interest Your Lordship takes in a late event. I come here to great disadvantage, the successor of an able and

virtuous man with a princely fortune ; nevertheless I feel that I can be of use to my Country, and I have one advantage over most other men, viz^t that no person existing has a claim upon me, except those which arise from meritorious service. I am free from prejudices, and have no Job whatever to serve. To Mr. Dundas's partiality I attribute and ever shall, all my Career. Assure Lady Duncan I am not insensible of her approbation. . . .

Admiral William Dickson

1 March, 1801.

Many thanks, my dear Admiral, for your obliging letter upon my elevation to this office, the duties of which I will perform with the utmost degree of impartiality, for I bring no prejudices into office, and as few partialities as any man who ever filled this post.

Admiral Roddam

2 March, 1801.

The decay of discipline and of every other good principle in the Navy is much to be deplored, and every nerve I possess shall be exerted to restore it to its pristine vigour. . . .

Rear-Admiral Collingwood

15 March, 1801.

Many thanks for the obliging expressions contained in your letter of the first instant. In my endeavours to restore the Navy, in all its branches, to that vigour which can alone maintain our superiority at sea, both in arms and commerce, it is no small encouragement that I can safely calculate upon your support and that of all honest men like you. There is much to do, and a late attempt of my great Predecessor meets

with every species of opposition and obloquy, I mean 'a partial reform in our Dock Yards,' and comparing small things with great (which must come, or we are all ruined), I shall have a very difficult task to perform, if I preside at this Board in times of Peace. . . .

Rear-Admiral Sir George Home, Bart.

19 March, 1801.

. . . The good opinion and support of my Brother Officers in the very arduous task imposed upon me will be a great encouragement to pursue, with unremitting vigour, the principles which I have laid down, as the guide of my conduct. There is much to do, both in the civil and military branch of the Navy; the Board appears to be well formed and thoroughly disposed to work hard.

Miss C. Egan, Bon Success, Lisbon 1 April, 1801.

. . . I am raised to the highest situation a Sea Officer can ambition, and am endeavouring by my conduct to show that I am not totally unworthy of it. . . .

General O'Hara 25 April, 1801.

Many thanks to you, my dear General, for the interest you take in my elevation to this very important employment, which you do me justice in believing I shall discharge with the same zeal and assiduity you have been witness to, in an inferior station. . . .



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